



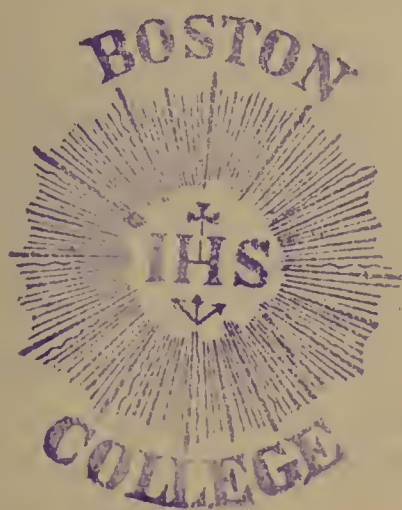


Ancient Classics for English Readers

EDITED BY THE

REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

HERODOTUS



9 297

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HERODOTUS

BY

GEORGE C. SWAYNE, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD

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INTRODUCTION.

So little is known for certain regarding the life of Herodotus, "the father of history," that it may well be a subject of congratulation that he has not shared the fate of Homer, the father of poetry, in having doubt thrown on his individual existence.

He appears to have been born about the year 484 before Christ, between the two great Persian invasions of Greece, at Halicarnassus, a colony of Dorian Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor. His family was one of some distinction. From his writings alone we should know that he received a liberal education, and became familiarly acquainted with the current literature of his day; and the epic form of his great prose work, besides numberless expressions and allusions, bears witness to the fact that the Homeric poems were his constant study and model.

His early manhood was spent in extensive travels, in which he accumulated the miscellaneous materials of his narrative. He visited, in the course of them, a great part of the then known world; from Babylon and Susa in the east, to the coast of Italy in the

west ; and from the mouths of the Dnieper and the Danube in the north, to the cataracts of Upper Egypt southwards. Thus his travels covered a distance of thirty-one degrees of longitude from east to west, and twenty-four of latitude from north to south—an area of something like 1700 miles square. It was an immense range in days when there were few facilities for locomotion, and when every country was supposed to be at war with its neighbours, unless bound by express treaties of peace and alliance. He travelled, too, it must be remembered, in an age when robbers by land and sea were members of a recognised profession,—very lucrative and not entirely disreputable : when (as we shall see hereafter) disappointed political or military adventurers took to piracy as a last resort, without any sort of compunction. “Pray, friends, are you pirates,—or what?” is the question which old Nestor puts to his visitors, in the ‘*Odyssey*,’ without the least intention either of jesting or of giving offence. A voyage itself was such a perilous matter, that a Greek seaman never, if he could help it, lost sight of land in the daytime, or remained on board his ship during the night ; and at a later date the philosopher Aristotle distinctly admits that even his ideal “brave” man may, without prejudice to his character, fear the being drowned at sea. The range of our author’s travels is, however, less wonderful than their busy minuteness. He is traveller, archæologist, natural philosopher, and historian combined in one. He appears scarcely ever to have concluded his visit to a country without exhausting every available source of information. Personal inquiry alone seems to have satisfied him, wherever it could be made ; though he consulted carefully all written materials within his

reach, records public and private, sacred and secular. He rightly calls his work a "History," for the Greek word "history" means really "investigation," though it has passed into a different use with us. In Egypt alone he seems to have spent many years, visiting and exploring its most remarkable cities—Memphis, Hieropolis, and the "hundred-gated" Thebes. In Greece proper, as well as its colonies on the Asiatic seaboard and in South Italy, and in all the islands of the Archipelago, he is everywhere at home, as well as in the remoter regions of Asia Minor.

Such details of his life as have come down to us rest on somewhat doubtful authority. It is said that he was driven from Halicarnassus to Samos by the tyranny of Lygdamis, grandson of that Queen Artemisia whose conduct he nevertheless, with some generosity, immortalises in his account of the battle of Salamis; that in Samos he learned the Ionic dialect in which his history is written; that in time he returned to head a successful insurrection against Lygdamis, but then, finding himself unpopular, joined in the Athenian colonisation of Thurium, in Italy, where he died and was buried, and where his tomb in the market-place was long shown. His residence at Samos may have been a fiction invented to explain the dialect in which he wrote, which was more probably that consecrated by usage to historical composition. At one time he appears to have removed to Athens, where he received great honours, partly in the substantial shape of ten talents (more than £2400), after a public recitation of his history. According to one story, he was commissioned to read it before the Assembly of all the Greek States on the occasion of

the great national games held every fourth year at Olympia in Elis.

Amongst the audience on some such occasion, most probably at Athens, a young Athenian, Thucydides, is said to have been present; and the introduction which then took place may have given the first stimulus to the future historian of the Peloponnesian war, who, despairing of surpassing his predecessor as a charming story-teller, boldly struck out for himself a new path, as the founder of the critical method. It seems also that at Athens Herodotus enjoyed the friendship of the great tragic poet Sophocles. Plutarch has preserved the opening words of a poem in which the tragedian compliments the historian, after he had quitted Athens for Thurium. In two of the tragedies of Sophocles, the 'Edipus at Colonos' and the 'Antigone,' are passages plainly adapted from this history. The society of Athens under Pericles, comprising all that was most select and brilliant in art and intellect, must have had great attractions for Herodotus; and it implies some self-denial on his part to have torn himself away from it. Probably he longed to exercise, as most Greeks did, full political rights, which, as an alien, he could not enjoy at Athens, though he was evidently an enthusiastic admirer of her institutions.

After his emigration to Thurium, he seems to have devoted his life to the elaboration and amplification of his great work. Several passages in his history prove that he was, at all events, acquainted with the earlier events of the great Peloponnesian war. The balance of evidence seems to point to his death having occurred when he was about sixty. If so, he at least escaped witnessing, as the result of that war, the fall of his

beloved Athens from her well-won supremacy over Greece.

The history of Herodotus is a great prose epic, suggested doubtless to the author in early life by the fame of those events which were still fresh in the minds of all men—the repulse of the Persian invasion, and the liberation of Greece. The Greeks had thrown off colonies, from time to time, into the islands of the Levant and the west coast of Asia.* These Asiatic Greeks had actually been enslaved by Persia; and European Greece, though free from the first, could only wake to the full consciousness of that freedom when the overshadowing dread of the monster Asiatic power had been dissipated. Independence could be but a name for either Athenian or Spartan, so long as the very sight of the Persian dress (as Herodotus tells us) inspired terror. Until Miltiades won Marathon, by a rush as apparently desperate as our Balaklava charge, the Persians had been reputed invincible. Their second expedition against Greece was intended to repair the damaged prestige of Persian valour, by setting in motion overwhelming numbers. It seemed as if the dead weight alone of Asiatic fleets and armies must carry all before it. It did indeed carry Athens, but not the Athenians. The sea-fight of Salamis was won by citizens who had lost their city. The two great victories which followed within a year—Platæa and Mycale, gained on the same day—indicated for ever the superiority of Europeans over Asiatics. The latter was fought out

* Of these colonies, some were Ionian, some Dorian, and some Æolian, having been originally founded by each of these old Greek races. But Herodotus usually speaks of them all as “Ionians,” as these took the most active share in the war.

on Asiatic ground—the beginning of the great retribution which has continued even to the present time, represented by uncertain tides of Western conquest gradually gaining ground on the East.

Never before or since has an author employed himself with grander subject-matter than Herodotus. The victories of Freedom in all ages, more than any other conquests, have stirred the human heart to its depths. It is the cause that alone humanises war, and makes it other than brutal butchery. Many such victories there have been in the course of time, but all of local and limited importance in comparison. And, indeed, perhaps Marathon made Morgarten possible. By Salamis and Plataea the world may have escaped being orientalised for ever, and bound in the immobility of China. These battles, by saving freedom and securing progress, anticipated the overthrow of the Saracens before Tours, and of the Turks before Vienna. Herodotus, indeed, could not see all this, when the plan of his great history dawned on his mind, but the salvation of his beloved Greece was to him a sufficient inspiration.

We find the same unity of design in the history of Herodotus as in Homer's great epic. As in the 'Iliad,' not the siege of Troy but the wrath of Achilles is the continual burden, so, in our author's work, not the history of Greece but the destruction of the great Persian armada is its one great subject. All the other local histories, though introduced with much fulness of detail, are subordinate to this consummation. They flow to it like the tributaries of a river, whose might and grandeur make men love to explore its sources. He gives us in succession the early history of Lydia, of Babylon, and of Assyria, in order to trace the rise

and fall of those several Asiatic powers which merged at last in the great empire of the Medes and Persians, who are the actors in his true drama, to which these preliminary histories are a discursive prologue. His work is not a romance founded on fact, like Xenophon's 'Education of Cyrus,' or Shakspeare's historical plays, or Scott's 'Quentin Durward.' It is serious history, as history was understood in his time. But the historian's appetite was omnivorous in the collection of materials, and robustly digested fable and fact alike. His mind was like that of Froissart and Philip de Comines, who lived in another age, when miracles were thought matters of course. Yet in Herodotus we perceive the dawning of that criticism which finds its full expression in Thucydides, who was in mind a modern historian, though less fastidious as to the evidence of facts than a man of our century would be. The incredulity of Herodotus, when it shows itself, seems rather evoked by the suspected veracity of his informant, or some contradiction in phenomena, than by the incredible nature of the facts themselves.

He has been most found fault with for ascribing effects to inadequate causes ; but we ought rather to feel grateful to him, considering the mould in which the mind of his time was cast, for endeavouring to trace the connection between cause and effect at all. In Homer the gods are always in requisition, and always at hand to manage matters, even in minutest details. That Herodotus had a religious mind there can be no doubt, for he speaks even of foreign and barbaric rites and beliefs with intense respect. And the great Liberation War of Greece was, in its circumstances, calculated to illustrate one great pervading principle of his

religion—that heaven will not allow an excess of mortal prosperity. The rock which overhung the bay of Salamis, whence Xerxes looked down on his host, might well bear the statue of Nemesis. Nemesis, in the religious system of the ancient Greeks, is the great divine stewardess, who assigns to man his quota of good or of evil. If man takes to himself more good than his share, she adjusts the balance by giving him evil; for the gods are jealous of those who try to vie with them. Did not Apollo flay Marsyas for daring to contend with him on the lyre? Did not Minerva change Arachne into a spider for boasting to be a better spinster than herself? So the Sovereign of the gods cannot endure the luxury and pride of the earthly despot. It becomes the business of Nemesis to compass his destruction. She invokes against him *Atè*, or Infatuation. *Atè* blindfolds his mind, and forces him to enter of his own will on the path whose end is destruction. To ward off this, men resort to sacrifice; but any sacrifice short of what is most precious is useless. Polycrates, the despot of Samos, almost insults the gods in supposing that throwing a jewel into the sea will atone for the crime of prosperous sovereignty; the ring comes back to him in a fish brought to his table. Was not Agamemnon compelled to sacrifice his daughter, the pride of his house, before he could obtain a fair wind to sail to Troy? It seems to have been an article of the Athenians' creed, which Herodotus shared, that there was a sort of wickedness in one free man attempting to rise above the level of his fellow-citizens; and perhaps they thought that their honourable punishment of ostracism was devised as

much for a great man's good as for theirs.* It was a kind of inverted doctrine of the divine right of kings, traces of which we find throughout the Attic literature. Had Herodotus lived in our day, we may imagine that his attention would have been powerfully arrested by the fate of Napoleon the First, or the Czar Nicholas of Russia, as illustrating this sentiment.

Frequent references will be found in these pages to Mr Rawlinson's 'History of Herodotus;' but it is desired here to acknowledge more distinctly the use which has been made of his exhaustive volumes.

The History of Herodotus was divided by the ancients into nine books, each bearing the name of one of the Muses. His own order of narration is very discursive, for he digresses into local history and anecdote continually. In these pages a rearrangement into chapters will perhaps be more welcome to the general reader.

* Ostracism was so called from the oyster-shells on which Athenian citizens wrote their names in voting. Any man of more than average greatness or goodness was liable to incur this left-handed compliment, which consisted in his being requested to go abroad for a term of years, in case a sufficient number of votes was given. It was instituted as a security to democracy, and as preventive of *coups d'état*. It was discredited at last by its application to the case of a vulgar demagogue. The Syracusans had a similar institution called "Petalism," from the leaves of olive on which the names were written.

THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS.

CHAPTER I

CRÆSUS.

“ And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs.”

—MILTON, “L’Allegro.”

IN the great quarrel between Europe and Asia, which is the end and scope of our author’s work, it is of the utmost consequence to the satisfaction of his religious principles that the balance of blame should incline to the side of the true offenders. According to the showing of the Persians themselves, who had their story-tellers, if not historians, the Asiatics were the first offenders. A Phœnician skipper went to Argos, and carried off Io, the king’s daughter, to Egypt, whither he was bound. By way of reprisals, the Greeks then carried off two women for one—Europa from Tyre, and Medea from Colchis. This may have partly excused Alexander or Paris, son of Priam king of Troy, for carrying off Helen, the wife of Menelaus, from Sparta, in the second generation afterwards. But then, said the Persians, the Greeks put themselves clearly in the wrong

—for instead of carrying off another lady, they made the abduction of Helen a case of war. “To carry off women was manifestly the deed of unjust men, but to make so serious matter of their abduction was the part of simpletons, since they hardly could have been carried off without their own consent.” Indeed, according to one account, Io at least eloped of her own free will. But in fact, our historian thinks, from the time of the Trojan war the Asiatics looked upon the Greeks as their natural enemies.

Without discussing too curiously all these tales, Herodotus has no doubt in his own mind that the blame ought to lie with the Asiatics, since Cræsus, king of Lydia, was the first historical aggressor. Before his time all the Greeks were free, and he was the first Asiatic potentate who, by fair means or foul, reduced Grecian states to various kinds of dependency. The towns on the coast he subdued by force, easily enough. He had proposed to try the same means with the islanders of the Archipelago, when he was dissuaded from his purpose by a shrewd jest. Among other travellers who visited his court was one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece—Bias of Priene. The king asked him, as he did all his visitors, what was the last news? “The islanders,” said Bias, “are busy raising a force of cavalry with which they mean to invade Lydia.” Cræsus declared it was the very thing he could wish,—but he hardly believed they could be so utterly foolish. Bias ventured to think that the Greek islanders would be equally amused to hear that the Lydians intended to attack them on their own element. The king took the hint: and it is the earliest specimen we have of the wisdom which after-

wards so often clothed itself in the language of the "Court Fool."

The Lydians appear to have been a people, like the Egyptians, of nearly immemorial civilisation, and, like the Asiatic tribes who fought for the Trojans, to have had a common origin with the Greeks themselves, and to have differed little from them in manners and customs. There is manifest truth in the tradition which connected them with the Etruscans and the Pelasgians; and their three dynasties, of the second of which Hercules was said to be the founder, may have represented three cognate races of conquerors, like the Saxons, Danes, and Normans with us. They appear to have been at first a warlike people, but to have been enervated by conquest, and then, like the descendants of the ancient Italians, to have become chiefly famous as artists; especially as musicians.

This Cræsus, the son of Alyattes, in time extended his empire over most of the countries westward of the river Halys. He was, in some sort, the Solomon of his age; fabulously rich, magnificent in his expenditure, and of unbounded hospitality; so that great men came to visit him from all parts, and to gaze on the splendours of his court. Amongst them was Solon the Athenian. Solon had remodelled the laws of Athens, with the concurrence of the Athenian people, but, knowing the fickleness of his countrymen, had gone into voluntary exile for ten years, having bound them by oath that they would make no change in their institutions in his absence. Cræsus, in the course of his conversations with Solon, wished to extract from him the confession that he considered him the happiest of mankind. Solon refused to account any man happy till death had

set its seal on his felicity, and took occasion to warn Cræsus of the instability of all human affairs, dilating especially on the jealous nature of the gods. The king could not brook the plain-speaking of his guest, and dismissed him in disfavour. He was soon to prove the truth of his warning: the terrible Nemesis, says our author, was awakened—probably, he thinks, by this very boast of thinking himself the happiest of mortals. Then he goes on to tell, in his own delightful fashion—

THE STORY OF ADRASTUS.

Cræsus had two sons—the one grievously afflicted, for he was deaf and dumb, but the other by far the first of the youths of his age, by name Atys. Now Cræsus dreamed that he should lose this Atys by the stroke of an iron weapon. Through fear of this dream, he took him no longer with him to the wars, but sought out for him a wife who might keep him at home. Nay, he even had all the weapons that hung in the men's rooms stacked away in the inner chambers, lest any of them might fall on him by accident. While the marriage was preparing, there came to seek refuge at Sardis a Phrygian of royal birth who had committed homicide. Cræsus purified him with the due rites, and then inquired his name. He said, "I am Adrastus, son of Gordias; I slew my brother by misadventure, and my father has turned me out of doors, and I have lost all." And Cræsus answered, "Thou art the son of a friend, and art come to friends; with me thou shalt lack nothing. Thou wilt do best to bear thy mishap as lightly as thou mayest." About this time it came to pass that a huge wild boar came out of

Mount Olympus in Mysia and laid waste the fields ; and the people came to Cræsus and besought him to send to them his son to help them with the hunting-train. And Cræsus, mindful of the dream, refused to send his son, but promised to send the train and picked sportsmen of the Lydians. But his son Atyr coming in, was much vexed, and said, "Thou bringest me to shame, my father, in the eyes of the citizens and of my bride, in that thou dost forbid me to go to the wars and the chase, as though I were a coward." But Cræsus said, "I hold thee no coward, yet I do wisely, for I was warned by a dream that an iron weapon should slay thee ; therefore did I give thee a wife to keep thee at home. For thou art in truth my only son, for the other I count as though he were not, being deaf and dumb." Then answered the son, "It is natural, my father, to take good heed on my behalf, after such a dream. But what iron weapon hath a boar, or what hands to hurl it? If indeed thou hadst dreamed that I should die by a tusk, thou wouldst be wise in doing what thou doest, but not now, for this war is not with men." Cræsus confessed himself persuaded by these words, and allowed his son to join the chase ; but he begged Adrastus to go with him and guard him, lest any evil should happen by the way ; and Adrastus, though heavy of heart, deemed that he could deny Cræsus nothing in return for his kindness, and went accordingly. So the hunters made a great hunt, and having brought the boar to bay, stood round and threw javelins at him. And it came to pass that Adrastus threw his javelin, and missed the boar, and killed the son of Cræsus. So the dream was fulfilled. Now Cræsus, when he heard the news, was

sorely troubled, and in his anguish called on Jupiter as lord of purification, as lord of the hearth, as lord of companionship, to witness what he suffered at the hands of his suppliant, his guest, and the man whom he had sent to guard his son. And now came the Lydians bearing the corpse, and behind them followed the slayer, Adrastus. And he, standing before the bier and stretching forth his hands, besought Cræsus to take his life, as he was no longer worthy to live. Then Cræsus, though in great grief, pitied him and said, "Thou hast made full atonement, in that thou hast judged thyself worthy of death. Thou art not to blame, but as a tool in the hands of some god, who long since did signify to me what should come to pass." So Cræsus buried his son, and spared Adrastus. But when he was departed, Adrastus, as thinking himself of all men the most wretched, slew himself upon the tomb. And Cræsus mourned for his son for the space of two years. But at the end of that time he was fain to bestir himself, for there came to him a rumour that Cyrus the Persian had conquered the Medes, and was exalting himself above all the kings of the earth ; and he hasted, if it were possible, to crush the Persian power before it became too strong.

Cræsus, in Herodotus' story, appears in close relations with the god Apollo. The world-famous shrine of this god was at Delphi on Mount Parnassus, currently believed to be the exact centre of the earth—the earth itself being looked upon as a round disc. In the temple there, the site of which was supposed to be the spot where the serpent Python was slain by the arrows of the Sun-god, there was an oracle, the most renowned

in the world. Its answers, in spite of their ambiguity, guided the public and private affairs of the Greeks to an extent which appears to us now almost ludicrous. Though generally vague and perplexing, yet they were often so much to the point, that some of the old Fathers of the Church attributed them to Satanic influence, as they doubtless would table-turning and spirit-rapping, if they lived now. It was also believed that their efficacy ceased exactly with the coming of our Lord, by which time, at all events, faith in them had worn out. Milton alludes to this tradition in his "Hymn on the Nativity":—

"The oracles are dumb ;
 No voice or hideous hum
 Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
 Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
 No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell."

Before he determined on his expedition against Cyrus, Cræsus sent to test the most famous oracles in Greece and that of Jupiter Ammon in Libya, in order that he might know which was most to be trusted. And he made the trial thus: he told his messengers to ask each oracle, on the hundredth day after their departure, what Cræsus was doing at that particular hour. The other answers are unrecorded, but the answer of the priestess of Apollo at Delphi ran thus:—

"Truly the tale of the sand I know, and the measures of
 ocean—

Deftly the dumb I read, I list to the voice of the silent.

Savour has reached my sense from afar of a strong-skinned tortoise

Simmering, mixed together with flesh of lamb, in a caldron ;
Brazen the bed is beneath, and brazen the coverlet over."

Cræsus, when he received this answer, judged the god of Delphi to be the wisest, since he alone could tell exactly what he was doing—for he had been cooking the flesh of a tortoise, mixed with lamb's flesh, in a brass caldron with a brass lid. Accordingly he sent rich presents to the shrine of Apollo, and ordered all his subjects to pay him especial honours. Thus having satisfied himself that this oracle at least was true, he next sent to inquire if he should go to war with the Persians. The answer was, that if he did so "he would ruin a great empire ;" at which answer Cræsus rejoiced greatly, for he expected to destroy the empire of the Persians. He sent a third time and inquired of the oracle if his reign would be long? And the oracle answered :—

"When it shall come to pass that the Medes have a mule
for monarch,

Lydian, tender of foot, then along by the pebbles of
Hermus

Flee, and delay not then, nor shame thee to quail as a
coward."

Cræsus rejoiced still more when he heard this, for he thought that, as a mule could never reign over men, the rule of himself and his descendants would never come to an end.

His next step, still under the advice of the oracle, was to make friends of the most powerful Greek states. At this point Herodotus, having wound his readers up to the expectation of a catastrophe, like some

modern novelists, diverges into one of his favourite episodes, and takes advantage of the fact that Cræsus found the leading Greek states to be the Lacedæmonians and Athenians, to relate a part of their history.

At Athens, Pisistratus, the son of Hippocrates, had now raised himself to absolute power. Athens being divided between the parties of the Plain and the Coast, he had headed the third, called the party of the Mountain, and by pretending that his enemies had wounded him, managed to be allowed a body-guard, and then seized on the citadel. He had some vicissitudes of fortune before he was firm in the saddle, and on one occasion returned to Athens in a chariot accompanied by a woman of great beauty and stature, who personated the goddess Athenè (Minerva).* The success of the imposition is possible, if we remember that the early Greeks believed that the gods sometimes came down visibly among mortals. By whatever devices, however, he gained or secured the sovereignty, he appears to have ruled well and righteously, and to have done much for the civilisation and glory of Athens.

The Spartans or Lacedæmonians were now beginning to assert the leadership which they afterwards obtained in the Peloponnese, as a consequence of those laws of Lycurgus, whose sole end and object was to make Sparta a model barrack for a state of soldiers.

With the Spartans Cræsus had no difficulty in concluding an alliance, as the path of friendship had

* If he had also been accompanied by the owl of that goddess, the case would have been very like one which occurred in the remembrance of this generation, when a fugitive prince landed in France with a tame eagle on his shoulder

been paved by a previous interchange of gifts and civilities; they had also heard of the Delphic prophecies. He immediately proceeded to commence a campaign against the Persians by marching into Cappadocia. A sensible Lydian made one last effort to dissuade him. "O king," said he, "thou art about to march against men who have trousers of leather, and all the rest of their dress of leather, and they feed not on what they would like but on what they have; for their land is rough. Nay more, they are unacquainted with wine, being water-drinkers, and they have no figs to eat, nor anything else that is good. If thou conquerest them, thou canst get nothing from them, for they have nothing to lose; if thou dost not, thou wilt lose all thine own good things. There will be no thrusting them back when once they have had a taste of what we enjoy; nay, I thank the gods that they do not put it into the mind of the Persians to march against the Lydians."

In undertaking this war, Cræsus was prompted partly by ambition, partly by his desire to punish Cyrus for dethroning Astyages, the king of Media, who was his brother-in-law. Crossing the river Halys,* the northern boundary, he advanced to the country near Sinope, on the Black Sea—in modern times notorious as the scene of the destruction of the Turkish fleet by the Russians. Here Cyrus marched out to meet him. A battle took place in which both sides claimed the victory. Cræsus, however, thinking his numbers too small for ultimate success, determined to fall back on Sardis, and begin the war again after the winter with larger forces. He sent round to his allies to tell them to join him in four

* Now the Kizil Irmak.

months' time. But his long course of prosperity was drawing to its close. Cyrus had not been so crippled by the battle but that he could march straight to Sardis and so "bring the news of his own arrival." Cræsus, though surprised, led out the Lydians to meet him. They were at this time as good men of war as any in Asia. They fought, like the knights of chivalry, on horseback, with long lances; and the plain before Sardis was the battle-field of their predilection. But Cyrus invented a device to paralyse this cavalry. Taking advantage of a horse's natural fear of camels, he organised a camel brigade and placed it in his front, with infantry behind it, and his own cavalry in the rear. Though the Lydian knights, like the Austrians at Sem-pach, dismounted and fought on foot, the battle went against them, and Cræsus soon found himself besieged in his capital. Then he sent messengers to his allies urging them to help him with all speed.

The Spartans, even had they been able to reach Sardis in time, could not set out at once, as they happened just then to have their hands full. They were fighting with the men of Argos about a tract of borderland called Thyrea. Argos had been in the old Homeric times the head of the Peloponnesus, and was always very jealous of Spartan supremacy. The plausible plan had been adopted of fighting out this particular quarrel by three hundred chosen men on each side; though three on each side, as in the affair of the Horatii and Curiatii between Rome and Alba, might have answered the purpose quite as well. The combat proved as deadly as that between the rival Highland clans recorded by Scott in his 'Fair Maid of Perth.' Two only of the Argives were left,

who ran home with the news of the victory ; while a single Spartan, raising himself up from amongst a heap of dead, remained in possession of the field and set up a trophy. So the result was considered indecisive, and the main armies fell to fighting, and the Spartans conquered. Then the Argives shorn their hair, which they formerly wore long, and bound themselves under a curse not to let it grow again till they had recovered Thyrea, and forbade their women to wear gold ornaments—a prohibition probably more difficult to enforce. The Spartans, in retaliation, made a contrary vow, to let their hair grow, having worn it cropped before. The survivor of their three hundred was said to have slain himself for shame.

In the mean time Croesus was a lost man. The citadel of Sardis had been scaled by the Persians at a point where a king of old had omitted to carry round a lion, which was to operate as a charm to prevent its being taken. It has been mentioned that Croesus had a son who was deaf and dumb. His father had tried in vain all means to cure him of his affliction, and given up the attempt in despair. But now, when Sardis was taken, a soldier approached Croesus, not knowing who he was, to slay him ; and Croesus, in his deep grief, did not care to hinder him, which he might have done by giving his name, since Cyrus had issued express orders to his army that the king of Lydia was to be taken alive. Then suddenly the tongue of the youth was loosed, and when he saw the Persian approaching, he cried out—"Fellow, do not kill Croesus!" and having made this beginning, he continued able to speak for the rest of his life. Thus Croesus was taken prisoner, after a reign of fourteen years, and Cyrus, in the cruel spirit of

the age, placed him on a pile of wood, with the intention of burning him alive. Then Cræsus bethought him of the wise words of Solon, how no man should be accounted happy until the end, and in his anguish called aloud thrice upon Solon's name. Cyrus asked the meaning of the cry, and when he heard the story, was so touched that he ordered the pile, which was already lighted, to be put out. But this could not be done by all their exertions until Cræsus prayed to Apollo for aid, when suddenly a great storm of rain came on and extinguished the fire.

Cyrus treated his royal prisoner with all honour. When the Persian soldiers began to plunder Sardis, Cræsus inquired of his conqueror what they were doing. "Spoiling thy goods, O Cræsus." "Nay, not mine," replied the fallen monarch, "but thine, O Cyrus." Then Cyrus stopped the sack of the city, and in gratitude for the suggestion of Cræsus, begged him to name any favour he could do him. "My lord," said he, "suffer me to send these chains to the god at Delphi, and to ask if this is how he requites his benefactors, and whether ingratitude is an attribute of Greek gods in general?" For Cræsus had loaded the shrine of Apollo with costly presents. The message was sent, and the priestess of the oracle made this reply: "Cræsus atones for his forefather Gyges, who slew Candaules his master. Apollo desired that the judgment should fall on the son of Cræsus and not on himself, but the gods themselves cannot avert fate. The god did what he could, for he deferred the fall of Sardis three years beyond the destined time: secondly, he put out the fire, and prevented Cræsus being burnt alive: thirdly, he did not give a lying oracle, for he only said that

Cræsus should destroy a great empire, without saying what empire it should be. Cræsus had no right to interpret his words according to his own wish. As to the oracle about the mule, he might have known that Cyrus was a Persian by his father's side and a Mede by his mother's, and so a hybrid king." Cræsus was obliged to acquiesce in the explanation, and to take his fate patiently. His ruin was, indeed, no common bankruptcy. "As rich as Cræsus" soon grew into a vernacular proverb. Yet he was by no means a bad specimen of the millionaire. His gentleness and good-nature were as proverbial as his wealth, and Pindar, the Theban poet, testifies to this point—doubtless for substantial reasons of his own :—

"Of kindly Cræsus and his worth
The name doth never fade."

The strange vicissitudes of his life became a fertile subject for Greek romancers and moralists. His riches seem to have been derived partly from the grains of gold brought down in the sand of the river Pactolus, which made Asia Minor the California of antiquity. This was doubtless the origin of the fable of the Phrygian king Midas turning all that he touched to gold. It seems that Sardis in early times was an important place of trade, as Herodotus says that the Lydians were the first coiners of money and the first storekeepers, so far as was known. It was at the same time notorious as the great slave-market of the world

CHAPTER II.

CYRUS.

“ Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o’ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall’d temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak
Upreared of human hands.”

—BYRON, “Childe Harold.”

BEFORE the Medes or Persians made their appearance in history, the Assyrians, according to Herodotus, had ruled over upper Asia for five hundred and twenty years. Asshur appears in Scripture * as a son of Shem, who went out from the land of Shinar and founded Nineveh. Herodotus is supposed to have written a separate history of Assyria, which has been lost ; but Layard and others have deciphered for us a new history from the monuments of that wonderful empire. The bearded kings and warriors, with their wars and lion-hunts graven on sandstone slabs, which are to be seen in the British Museum and in the Louvre in Paris, look as fresh as if they had been sculptured yesterday instead of nearly three thousand years ago. The Assyrians were of the Semitic race, of the same family as the

* Gen. x. 11, 22.

Jews and Arabs ; while the Medes and Persians were, in Scriptural phrase, of the sons of Japheth—that is, they belonged to the same Aryan, Iranian, or Indo-Germanic family as the Greeks and Romans, and ourselves. The home of the Assyrians and their cognate Babylonians was in the great plain of Mesopotamia, while the Medes lived in the mountains to the east, and the Persians to the south-east. The Median highlanders, being of more hardy habits, first conquered the Assyrian lowlanders, and then, descending to their softer country and habits, were conquered in their turn by the hardier Persians. The decline of Assyria was consummated by the fall of Nineveh, which was taken, about B.C. 625, by Cyaxares, third king of the Medes, in conjunction with the Babylonians. The first king of the Medes is said to have been Deioces, who built the wonderful city called by Herodotus Agbatana,* and less correctly by later writers Ecbatana, with its seven circular walls, one within the other, with the palace and treasuries in the centre. The first wall had white battlements, the second black, the third scarlet, the fourth blue, the fifth orange. The last two walls had their battlements silvered and gilt. They rose one above another on a conical hill, and were supposed to have had a symbolic meaning, as referring to the sun, moon, and five planets, or the deities presiding over the days of the week. The last king of the Medes was Astyages, the son of Cyaxares. He had given his daughter Mandane in marriage to Cambyses, who was, according to our author's account, a poor Persian gentleman, but according to later authorities, a descendant of the first Persian king Achæ-

* In the Behistun inscription it is Hagmatāna.

menes. Astyages dreamed that he saw a vine spring from the body of his daughter Mandane, which overshadowed the whole of Asia. We know from Scripture how much stress the Chaldeans and the Medes laid on dreams. Fearing that an offspring of Mandane would deprive him of his sovereignty, Astyages ordered the son that was born of her to be destroyed. The courtier Harpagus, who was commissioned to do this, passed on the child to one of the royal herdsmen, that he might expose it to die upon the mountains. But the herdsman's wife, when she saw that it was "a proper child," and plainly of noble birth, adorned for death with gorgeous apparel, took pity on the infant, and as she had just lost one of her own, persuaded her husband to expose the dead child, and save the living one, that she might nurse it. So the future Cyrus lived, while the herdsman's child received a royal funeral. When the boy was ten years old he was playing one day with the children of his village. The game was King and Courtiers. Cyrus was chosen king, and assumed the dignity as if he had been born to it, appointing officers, architects, guards, couriers, and an official called the King's Eye,* (possibly the head of the detective police).

* This officer is introduced in Aristophanes' comedy of 'The Acharnians.' He appears in a mask (as in a modern burlesque) with a single huge eye in the centre. He is brought to Athens by some envoys who have been at the court of Persia. Dicæopolis (an honest farmer who is present at the reception) is indignant at their waste of time and the public money.

"*Envoy*.—We've brought you here a nobleman—Sham-artabas
By name, by rank and office the King's Eye.

Dicæop.—God send a crow to peck it out, say I!

And yours th' ambassadors' into the bargain."

—FRERE'S Transl.

In carrying out his character, Cyrus ordered one of the children, the son of a Median of high rank, to be flogged for disobedience. The angry child went to the city and complained to his father, who in turn complained to the real king. Astyages ordered the despotic urchin to be brought into his presence. Unabashed, however, the boy justified himself; and this circumstance, together with a strong family resemblance, led to his recognition by the grandfather, who came at the truth by examining the herdsman and Harpagus. He now dissembled his wrath, pretended that he was glad the child had been saved, and invited Harpagus to send his son to be the companion of the young prince, and to come himself to dinner. After Harpagus had well feasted, Astyages asked him how he liked his entertainment; he said it was excellent. Upon this, a basket was shown to him containing the head, hands, and feet of his own son, on whose flesh he had been feasting. The father, with the dissimulation natural to the subjects of an Oriental despotism, observed that whatsoever the king did was right in his eyes. It is the very answer which the son of Ethelwold is said by William of Malmesbury to have made when King Edgar showed him his father's corpse, slain by him in the royal forest; the English chronicler having evidently borrowed from Herodotus.

Astyages now consulted the Magi (a caste of priests of whom we shall hear more hereafter) as to what was to be done. They said that they considered that Cyrus had ceased to be dangerous, since he had been king already in the children's play. So Astyages sent him away into Persia, to his real parents. Meanwhile

Harpagus nursed his revenge, till Cyrus was grown to man's estate, and then he felt his time was come. He sent a letter to the noble youth sewn up in the belly of a hare, bidding him put himself at once at the head of the Persians, and revolt from Astyages. This king—surely under some infatuation from heaven, says the historian—forgetting the deadly wrong which he had done Harpagus, sent him to suppress the revolt. He deserted to Cyrus, and the Medes were easily defeated. Thus Cyrus destroyed the great Median empire, and substituted that of the Persians—becoming, after the downfall of Cræsus, master of all Asia. He treated his grandfather Astyages with all honour to the day of his death.

There was a religious as well as a political dissidence between the two nations. They both worshipped the elements and “all the host of heaven,” and planetary deities; but the Persian national creed recognised both a good and an evil principle in nature, constantly at war, whom they called Ormuzd and Ahri-man. The Persians, according to Herodotus, eschewed images, temples, and altars, and sacrificed to the elemental deity on the tops of mountains. But he has evidently confused the Median worship with theirs. Their habits much resembled those of the old Germans, as described by Tacitus. They were originally a simple people, and compulsory education with them was limited to teaching their sons “to ride, to draw the bow, and speak the truth.” Next after lying, they counted running in debt most disgraceful, since “he who is in debt must needs lie.” Lepers were banished from society, as they were supposed to have sinned against the sun; even white pigeons being put under

“taboo” for a similar reason.* They were very much given to wine;† and discussed every subject of importance twice—first when they were drunk, and again when they were sober. As water was a sacred element, none might defile a river—a sanitary regulation in which we moderns would do well to follow them. The bodies of the dead presented a difficulty. They might not be buried, for the earth was sacred; or thrown into rivers, for water was sacred; or burnt, for fire was sacred. They were therefore exposed to be torn by birds and beasts—a fate of which the Greeks had the greatest horror. The Parsees of India, and the native Australians, dispose of their dead in much the same way. As a compromise, adopted from the Magi, a body might be buried when covered with wax to prevent its contact with the earth.

The Persians, when they had conquered the Medes, soon degenerated from their earlier simplicity, which is celebrated by Xenophon in his romance of the ‘Education of Cyrus.’

When Cyrus, by the defeat of Crœsus, had made himself master of Lydia, the Greek colonists on the Asiatic seaboard sent to him in alarm, and begged to be allowed to be his vassals on the same terms as they had been to Crœsus. He answered them by a scornful parable: “There was a certain piper who piped on the

* So to this day, in India, all *white* animals are looked upon much in the way in which we ourselves regard albinos—a kind of unhealthy *lusus naturæ*.

† Their successors retain the taste. “It is quite appalling,” says Sir H. Rawlinson, “to see the quantity of liquor which some of these toppers habitually consume, and they usually prefer spirits to wine.”

sea-shore for the fish to come out, but they came not. Then he took a net and hauled out a great draught of them. The fish, in their agonies, began to caper. But he said, 'Cease to dance now, since ye would not dance when I piped to you.'"* This answer drove the Ionian Greeks to fortify their towns and send ambassadors to Sparta for assistance. Their envoy, however, disgusted the Spartans by wearing a purple robe and making a long speech—two things which they detested; and they voted not to send the succours, but despatched a fifty-oared ship to watch the proceedings of Cyrus. When this vessel reached the port of Phocæa, a herald was sent on to Sardis to warn Cyrus from the Spartans not to hurt any Greek city on pain of their displeasure. This caused Cyrus to inquire who these Spartans were, and how many in numbers, that they dared to send him such a message. When he was informed he said, "I am not afraid of people who have a place in their city where they meet to cheat each other and forswear themselves" (meaning the agora or market-place); "and if I live, the Spartans shall have troubles enough of their own, without troubling themselves about the Ionians."

Cyrus had other business on his hands at present than to punish the Greeks; he therefore went back to Ecbatana, leaving a strong garrison in Sardis. But while he was on his way he heard that one Pactyas had induced the Sardians to revolt, and was besieging the garrison in the citadel. Troops were sent to put down the revolt; Pactyas, however, did not wait for their arrival, but fled to Cyme, on which the Persian general demanded his extradition. The men of Cyme sent to

* This Eastern apologue may serve as an illustration of the parable in Matt. xi. 16.

ask advice at a neighbouring oracle of Apollo, and the answer came that Pactyas was to be given up. Some of the citizens, not satisfied with this answer, thought the envoys must have made a mistake, and sent again to remonstrate with the god, but the answer was repeated ; whereupon Aristodicus, the principal envoy, went round the temple and cleared away all the nests of sparrows and other birds that he found there. While he was thus engaged, a voice came from the sanctuary,—“Unholy man, darest thou to tear my suppliants from my temple?” on which Aristodicus, by no means abashed, replied,—“O king, thou canst protect thine own suppliants, and yet thou orderest the Cymæans to surrender theirs.” “I do,” answered the god, “that you may the sooner perish ; for it was in the naughtiness of your hearts that you came to consult me on such a matter.”* Eventually they sent Pactyas to Chios for safety ; but the Chians gave him up to the Persians, even tearing him from the temple of Minerva ; and Atarneus, a district opposite Lesbos, was paid them as the price of blood. But there was a curse on the produce of Atarneus for ever.

The Persians now proceeded to punish the revolted Lydians and Ionians, and Harpagus, the king-maker, who had deposed Astyages, forthwith beleaguered Phocæa. The inhabitants of this city, however, preferred exile to slavery ; taking an oath never to

* The remarkable answer attributed here to the oracle may serve to illustrate the permission given to Balaam to go with the messengers of Balak. Even to the heathen mind, there were questions of conscience so clear, that to consult heaven specially in the matter was a mockery [See the almost parallel case of Glaucus, ch. viii]

return until a bar of iron, which they sank in the sea, should rise and float, they set sail, and, after a multitude of adventures, found a resting-place on the coast of Italy.

Most of the other towns on the coast were subdued after a gallant resistance, and the islanders gave themselves up. Then Harpagus turned inland against the Carians and Lycians. The Carians deserve notice as the reputed inventors of crests to helmets, and of heraldic devices. The Lycians were early advocates of the rights of women; naming men not after their fathers, as was usual, but after their mothers. The Lycians of Xanthus* made a desperate resistance. Finding they could not beat the Persians in the field, they made a great pile on which they burnt their wives and children, and all their valuables, and then sallied out and perished in battle to a man. Their example was imitated by Saguntum in Spain in the second Punic war.

While Harpagus was thus subduing the coast, Cyrus was pursuing his conquests in Upper Asia. He turned his arms against Labynetus, king of Babylon. This renowned city, says our historian, formed a vast square fifty-five miles in circuit. Its double walls were 340 feet high (nearly as high as St Vincent's rock at Bristol) and 85 feet thick. The measurements seem enormous, yet the great wall of China shows such works to be possible, when absolute power commands unlimited labour. The city itself was cut in two by the river Euphrates, the quays being fenced by walls with

* About thirty years ago the British Museum was enriched by some beautiful marbles brought from Xanthus by an expedition which explored Lycia under the conduct of Sir Charles Fellows.

water-gates for communication. One half contained the king's palace, the other the great sacred tower of Belus (Bel or Baal) with its external winding ascent. Babylon was in fact a fortified province rather than a city ; it resembled Jeddo in Japan, in being a collection of country houses with small farms and gardens attached. It seems to have been the ideal of what a great city ought to be, especially in days of internal railroads. London, containing its millions, with its thin houses laterally squeezed together, or Paris, with its horizontal piles of flats, and no corresponding spaces, would have excited the horror of the ancients, who in some respects were more civilised than ourselves. Herodotus attributes the great engineering works about Babylon, to prevent the Euphrates from overflowing the country, chiefly to two queens, Semiramis* and Nitocris, between whom he places an interval of five generations. Of this latter he relates a striking anecdote.

“She built for herself a tomb above the most frequented gateway of the city, exactly over the gates, and engraved on it the following inscription : ‘If any of the kings of Babylon who come after me shall be in need of money, let him open my tomb and take therefrom as much as he will ; but unless he is in need, let him not open it, else will it be worse for him.’ Now this tomb remained undisturbed until the kingdom fell to Darius. But he thought it absurd that this gateway should be made no use of—for it was not used, because one would have had to pass under the dead body as one

* This queen appears to have really reigned in conjunction with her husband. She is probably not the great queen known by the same name.

went out—and that when money was lying there idle, and calling out for some one to take it, he should not lay his hand on it. So he opened the tomb and found no money at all, but only the dead body, and these words written—‘ If thou wert not the greediest of men, and shameless in thy greed, thou wouldst not have disturbed the resting-place of the dead.’ ”

Although the author notices most of the wonders of Babylon, he makes no mention of the hanging-gardens, which excited the astonishment of later writers. Nebuchadnezzar is said to have constructed them out of affection for a Median wife, that she might not be afflicted with a Swiss longing for her native mountain scenery.*

Having defeated the Babylonians in battle, Cyrus drove them inside their huge walls. There they laughed at his efforts, having good store of provisions for many years. But their enemy proved himself as good an engineer as any of their queens, historical or fabulous. Taking advantage of reservoirs previously existing, he turned off by a canal the waters of the Euphrates, and the Persians walked into the city dry-shod by the bed of the river, even the water-gates having been left open by incomprehensible carelessness. Those who were in the centre of the city, says Herodotus, were still feasting, dancing, and revelling, after the Persians had entered. It is the night described in the Book of Daniel, when the terrible “handwriting” was seen upon the wall.†

The Babylonians were a luxurious people. Their

* So a great fox-hunter, who could not find it in his heart to leave England, is said to have turned his conservatory into a little Italy for his delicate wife.

† The names of the Eastern kings are so variously given,

full dress was a long linen tunic, with a woollen robe over it, and a short white cloak or cape over the shoulder. Though they wore their hair long, they swathed their heads in turbans, and perfumed themselves all over. Each citizen carried his walking-staff, carved at the top with the likeness of some natural object—such as an apple, a rose, a lily, or an eagle—and had also his private signet. Of these seals (which are hollow cylinders) great numbers have been found during the late explorations, and brought to Europe.*

Herodotus records one of their customs, which, whether in jest or earnest, he declares to be the wisest he ever heard of. This was their wife-auction, by which they managed to find husbands for all their young women. The greatest beauty was put up first, and knocked down to the highest bidder; then the next in the order of comeliness—and so on to the damsel who was equidistant between beauty and plainness, who was given away gratis. Then the least plain was put up, and knocked down to the gallant who would marry her for the smallest consideration,—and so on till even the plainest was got rid of to some cynical worthy who decidedly

that it is almost impossible to identify them either in sacred or profane history. The Labynetos of Herodotus is Nabonidus, or Nabonadius, in other writers. The “Belshazzar” whom Daniel calls “king” was probably his son, associated with him in the government. His name appears in inscriptions as Bilshar-uzur. We know from other authorities that Labynetos himself was not in the city at its capture.—See Rawlinson’s *Herodotus*, i. 524, &c.

* They are commonly of some composition, but occasionally have been found in amethyst, cornelian, agate, &c.—Layard’s *Nineveh and Babylon*, 602, &c.

preferred lucre to looks. By transferring to the scale of the ill-favoured the prices paid for the fair, beauty was made to endow ugliness, and the rich man's taste was the poor man's gain. The Babylonian marriage-market might perhaps be advantageously adopted in some modern countries where marriage is still made a commercial matter. It at least possesses the merit of honesty and openness, and tends to a fair distribution of the gifts of fortune.

Another Babylonian custom, of which Herodotus strongly approves, was that of employing no professional physicians, but placing the sick in the gate of the city, that they might get advice respecting the treatment of their diseases from every passer-by, and thus profit by the experience of those who had been afflicted in the same way as themselves. Whatever may be thought of the absence of regular practitioners, the alternative would certainly seem one of the exceptional cases where wisdom is not found in a multitude of counsellors.

Having annexed this great and rich province to his dominions, Cyrus seems to have been intoxicated with success, or, in our author's view, to have filled up the measure of his prosperity, which now began to run over in insolent self-confidence. He made an expedition against the Massagetæ or Greater Goths, who lived in the steppes near the Caspian Sea, and were ruled by an Amazonian widow named Tomyris. While encamping against her, Cyrus dreamed that Darius, the son of Hystaspes, a young noble of the royal house of Persia, appeared to him with wings on his shoulders (like some of the Assyrian gods whose figures he must have seen), with one of which he overshadowed

Asia and the other Europe. This portended his fall, and the ultimate accession of Darius. At first he gained a partial advantage by the stratagem of leaving a camp stored with wine to be plundered by the water-drinking Massagetæ, and then returning and massacring them in their sleep. This was the shrewd advice of Cræsus the Lydian, whom Cyrus had taken with him on the expedition. Among the prisoners taken was the son of the Massagetan queen. Cyrus released him from his bonds at his own request ; but the youth, unable to bear his disgrace, only took advantage of his liberty to kill himself. At length the invaders were forced to a general action—the fiercest, says Herodotus, ever fought between barbarian armies. The Persians were completely defeated, and Cyrus himself was slain, after a reign of twenty-nine years. Queen Tomyris, exasperated by the treacherous slaughter of her army and the death of her son, had threatened to give the bloodthirsty invader his fill of blood ; she kept her word by filling a skin with it, and plunging into it his severed head.

Such is the account which Herodotus gives of the death of the great Eastern conqueror, so famous both in sacred and profane history. He confesses that he has only chosen one legend out of many. There is little doubt, however, that he died in battle. But the Persian poets assigned a very different fate to their national hero, Kai Khusru, as his name stands in their language. They will not allow that he died at all. When he grew old, they say, he one day took leave of his attendants on the banks of a pleasant stream, and was seen no more. But, as in the case of Arthur and Barbarossa, and all the great favourites of a nation,

they looked forward to his coming again, more powerful and glorious than ever.

These Massagetæ, says our author, resembled the Scythians, but could fight on foot as well as on horseback, their favourite weapon being, as with the Anglo-Saxons, a battle-axe or bill. They had the peculiar custom of sacrificing their old people, and then feasting on them, and natural death was considered a misfortune. This curious people, whose descendants may be now in northern or western Europe, knew nothing of tillage, and lived on flesh, fish, and milk. Their only deity, known to Herodotus, was the Sun. To him they sacrificed the horse, with the notion that it was right to bestow the swiftest of creatures on the swiftest of gods. The Persians also attached a certain sanctity to some breeds of horses, and the Teutonic conquerors of Britain bore a horse as their cognisance. Some say that Hengist and Horsa were not names of men, but only represented a people using this national symbol. This rude heraldry of our northern ancestors—or conquerors—may still be traced in the “White Horse” cut out on the chalk-hills in more than one place on our Berkshire and Wiltshire downs.

CHAPTER III.

EGYPT.

“In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.”

—TENNYSON, “Lotos-Eaters.”

OF all the nine books of Herodotus, the second, which bears the name of the Muse “Euterpe,” is incomparably the one of deepest interest to the modern reader, as giving glimpses, such as are found nowhere else but in Scripture, of the infancy of the human race, and as propounding important scientific problems, which can, if ever, only find their solution in remote futurity. It is, moreover, the portion of his work which is most strongly stamped with the characteristics of the author’s personality. It must ever be borne in mind that Herodotus is not a historian in the modern sense of the term. He is the representative writer of a class who stand midway between poetical annalists like Homer and critical historians like Thucydides. They wrote their Iliads in prose, making no sharp distinction between truth and fiction. They did not yet look upon the verification of their facts as a duty, but jotted down all that they heard and saw, an instinctive love of truth alone suggesting occasional scepticism as to very extraordinary

marvels, so that the modern reader may just observe the dawning of the critical spirit. Predominantly in his Egypt, Herodotus appears as the traveller and archæologist; nor is he fairly afloat on the current of history until he launches himself into the narrative of the Persian invasions of Greece, of the circumstances of which he had more immediate knowledge—if not as an eyewitness, yet from those who had themselves been eyewitnesses.

Egypt has been in all ages the land of wonders, from the time when its “magicians” found their enchantments fail before the mightier Power which was with Moses, to that when Napoleon told his soldiers that from the top of the Pyramids four thousand years looked down on their struggle with the Mamelukes,—and to our own day, when a French engineer repeats the feat of the old native kings and the Greek Ptolemies, in marrying by a canal the Red Sea to the Mediterranean; an achievement which will make the name of Lesseps immortal, if the canal can only be kept clear of sand. The civilisation of Egypt is older than time—or at least, than its records. Her kings were counted wholesale—not by individuals, but by dynasties, of which there were said to have been thirty-one, exclusive of gods and heroes. She was the mother of the arts to Greece, as Greece has been to us. Her monuments are nearly as vast and as seemingly indestructible as the everlasting hills themselves, and the study of her mere remnants seems to present a field as inexhaustible as that of nature. No wonder that Herodotus willingly lingered in this interesting country. He was no holiday traveller, but one all ears and eyes, not likely to let any fact or

object escape him through carelessness or want of curiosity.

The Egyptians were wont to boast that they were the oldest people in the world; but our author says that their king Psammetichus once put this to the proof, and decided against them. Two infants were kept carefully apart from human society, their attendants being forbidden to utter a word before them. Under these circumstances women as nurses were out of the question, and they were suckled by goats. [There was indeed a Greek version of the legend, which said that the children were nursed by women—with their tongues cut out.] One day, when about two years old, they came to their keeper, stretching out their hands, and calling “Bekkos! bekkos!” This being Phrygian for “bread,” the palm of antiquity was adjudged to the Phrygians. The test was scarcely trustworthy, for probably enough the cry was only an imitation of the bleat of the goats. It has indeed been claimed by etymologists as the Sanscrit root “*pac*,” whence our word “cook” is said to be derived. The Germans, again, recognise in it their own “*bakken*” = bake.*

According to the priests, who were Herodotus’s chief informants, the whole country except the district of Thebes, seven days’ sail up the Nile from the sea, was originally a swamp. To the truth of this our author was ready to testify, as the whole Delta (called so from the shape of the Greek letter Δ , our D) appeared to him to be “the gift of the river.” This formation certainly required time, but he considered that the Nile was so

* Englishmen have suggested that it may have been a feeble attempt to call for “breakfast.”

energetic, that in ten thousand years (which is, after all, a very moderate geological period) it might even deposit alluvial soil enough to fill up the Arabian gulf of the Red Sea. The priests appear to have given him very good data for supplementing his own observations on the physical phenomena of the country; and in these details he evinces a patient investigation of facts which would do credit to any age, however scientific. He only becomes fanciful when he begins to speculate on the unknown. With respect to the causes of the annual inundations of the Nile, he could, naturally enough, get no trustworthy information. It struck him as particularly strange that the Nile, unlike other rivers, should begin to rise with the summer solstice, and be in a state of flood for a hundred days afterwards. Certain Greeks who affected a reputation for science endeavoured to account for the phenomenon in three ways. The third, which appeared to Herodotus the least plausible explanation, was, that the Nile was swollen by melting snows, though it flows through the torrid land of the Ethiopians into Egypt—which seemed to him a contradiction. Yet this theory was so near the actual truth, that the inundations are caused by the summer rains in the highlands of Abyssinia and on the equatorial table-land of Africa. That Herodotus had seen an inundation of the river is tolerably certain, from his description of the appearance of the country at such times. He speaks of the towns and villages standing out of the water “like the islands in the *Ægean Sea* ;” a graphic picture, of which modern travellers have recognised the truth. Adopting neither of the theories which had been advanced, Herodotus modestly propounds one of his own, which is curious, but of no

scientific value, as resting on false cosmographical data.

As to the sources of the Nile, he says that he never met with but one person who professed to know anything about them. This was the registrar of the treasury of Minerva at Saïs; but when he began to talk about two conical hills—"called Krophî and Mophî"—between Syene and Elephantinè (below the cataracts), Herodotus thought he could hardly be quite serious. Between those hills, said his informant, lay the fountains of the Nile, of unfathomable depth. Half the water ran to Egypt, the other half to Ethiopia. Psammetichus had tried to sound them with a rope many thousand fathoms in length, but there were such strong eddies in the water that the bottom of the spring could never be reached. Herodotus himself went up the Nile as far as Elephantinè—that is, did not get beyond the first cataract; and though he learnt much by inquiry as to the country generally, he could throw no additional light on the great question. But a story reached him originally derived from certain Nasamonians—a people inhabiting the edge of the desert—that once on a time certain "wild young men," sons of their chiefs, took it into their heads to draw lots which of them should go and explore the desert of Libya, and try to get farther than any one had gone before. Five of their number set out, well supplied with food and water, and passed first through the inhabited region, then through a country tenanted only by wild beasts, and then entered the desert, taking a direction from east to west. After proceeding for many days over a sandy waste, they came at last to a plain where

they found fruit-trees, and began to pluck the fruit. While they were doing so, certain very small men came upon them and took them prisoners. The Nasamonians could not understand them, nor make themselves understood. They were led by them across vast marshes, and at last came to a town where all the inhabitants were black dwarfs like their captors. A great river flowed by the town from west to east, abounding in crocodiles. And all the people in the town were wizards. It was added that the explorers returned in safety from their perilous journey. If the Bushmen now surviving at the Cape, and formerly more extensively spread over Africa, were a black race, which they are not, we might suppose them to be the descendants of the little men spoken of by Herodotus. Their colour may, however, have been modified by the temperate climate of South Africa in the course of long ages. The tribe of Dokos, in the south-west of Abyssinia, are dwarfish, and answer very nearly to Herodotus's description. Herodotus was inclined to identify the Nile with the river flowing by the mysterious city.*

It is strange that the oldest geographical problem in the world should be a problem still, though now probably in the course of solution. The nearest approach to the truth appears to have been made by the Alexandrian geographer, Ptolemy, who had heard of certain lakes as the sources of the Nile, and placed them some ten degrees south of the equator. The question slumbered through the middle ages, and one affluent after another was looked upon as the true Nile, till

* It was more probably, as Mr Rawlinson and Mr Blakesley both think, the Niger, and the city may have been Timbuctoo.

Bruce was for some time supposed to have set the question at rest in the eighteenth century, by the discovery of the source of the Blue River. Quite of late years it was agreed again that the White River was the main branch; and in 1857 Captain Speke, setting out from Zanzibar, discovered the Victoria Lake, which is now the farthest authenticated source in an easterly direction, while Sir Samuel Baker's Albert Lake is the farthest authenticated source in a westerly. Up to this time Speke and his companion Major Grant are the only men who have actually crossed Africa from south-east to north, and as yet the honours of discovery must be supposed to rest with them.

In treating of the wonders of Egypt, Herodotus certainly exaggerates on some points from love of paradox, as when he says that as the Nile differs from all other rivers in its nature, so the Egyptians differ from all other men in their habits, the men doing what is usually considered as women's work, and the women men's work; for in this he is refuted by the Egyptian paintings, which represent each sex as usually engaged in its proper occupation. But a Greek must have been much struck with the comparative freedom of the Egyptian women, so unlike the life of the Hellenic "lady's bower," or the Asiatic harem. Sophocles, in his 'Œdipus at Colonus,' has made a beautiful application of this recorded contrast to the helpful piety of the daughters and the selfish luxury of the sons of the blind hero, which would seem to show that he wrote the play fresh from the perusal of his friend's Egypt.

Our author makes the observation that the Egyptians were the first nation who, holding the soul to be immor

tal, asserted its migration after death through the whole round of created beings, till it lived again in another man, which occupied a cycle of three thousand years. This doctrine of a "circle of necessity" was held alike by Buddhists, Druids, and—if Josephus may be trusted—by the sect of the Pharisees among the Jews. But this Egyptian doctrine, which is profusely illustrated on the tombs, suffered the wicked only to descend into animals, while the good passed at once into a state of happiness. A striking custom which Herodotus describes would seem to show that to them, as to the Greeks, the future existence was not a cheering prospect.

"In the social banquets of the rich, as soon as the feast is ended, a man carries round a wooden figure of a corpse in its coffin, graven and painted so as to resemble the reality as nearly as possible, from one to two cubits long. And as he shows it to each of the guests, he says, "Look on this, and drink, and be merry; for when thou art dead, such shalt thou be."

The "skeleton at the banquet" has pointed many a moral for ancient and modern writers. St Paul may have had it in mind when he quoted as the motto of the Sadducee, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," as well as Shakespeare, when he makes his Hamlet moralise over Yorick's skull—"Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come."

Herodotus considers that the names of the gods came to Greece from Egypt, with the exception of Poseidon (Neptune), Castor and Pollux, Here (Juno), Hestia, Themis, the Graces and the Nereids. All these the Greeks were said to have inherited from the Pelasgians, with the exception of the sea-god Posei-

don, with whom they became acquainted through the Libyans. The Egyptians, unlike the Greeks, paid no honour to heroes or demigods; for their god Osiris (who corresponded to Bacchus) appeared on earth only as a manifestation or Avatar of Deity. Amongst the mythological marvels of the Egyptians, Herodotus relates that they accounted cows as sacred to Isis, the moon-goddess, represented with horns, and objected to kill them as food—a practice which finds its parallel in India at the present day. The sacredness of animals generally, in Egypt, struck our traveller forcibly. For each species there were certain appointed guardians, who tended and fed them, and the office was hereditary. To kill one of these sacred animals was a capital offence, unless done accidentally, in which case a fine was inflicted; but to kill an ibis or a hawk was death without reprieve. Cats were so much respected that, in case of a fire occurring, the Egyptians would let the house be burnt before their eyes, all their attention being given to saving the cats; which, however, they usually found impossible, as the animals (no doubt in terror at the well-meant efforts of their friends) had a trick of jumping into the flames. If they died, nevertheless, it was thought to be a terrible misfortune. When a cat died a natural death, all the inmates of a house went into mourning by shaving their eyebrows, and they shaved their heads and their whole bodies when a dog died. The dead cats were embalmed, and their mummies stored in the sacred city of Bubastis; but the dogs were buried in their own cities, as were also the ichneumons. The hawks and shrew-mice were conveyed to Buto, and the ibises to Hermopolis. It would seem by this that the animals about whose

funerals so much trouble was taken were more sacred than the rest.* The crocodile, of which Herodotus gives a description, perhaps as fairly accurate as could be expected from an ordinary observer, was accounted sacred by some of the Egyptians; for instance, by the people about Thebes, and those about Lake Mœris. In each of these places a tame crocodile was kept, who wore ear-rings (or rather rings in the corresponding holes) of glass or gold, and bracelets on his fore-paws. Every day he had his ration of bread and meat, and when he died he was buried in a consecrated vault. But the people of Elephantinè, so far from canonising these animals, thought them tolerable eating.

Herodotus gives a native receipt for catching crocodiles. Bait a hook with a chine of pork, and let it float to about the middle of the stream. Let a confederate hold a living pig on the bank, and belabour him lustily. The crocodile hears the pig squeak, and, making for him, encounters the pork, which he swallows. When the men on shore have drawn him to land, plug his eyes with mud; after that, it is very easy to kill him. This latter item of the receipt has a strong affinity to an old precept about "putting salt on a bird's tail." A very similar mode of capture (with this exception) is practised by the natives now. The name "crocodilos," as the author observes, is Ionic Greek for "lizard;" the Egyptians themselves calling the animal "champsä."† He is somewhat mistaken in his

* Lane says that the modern Egyptians are remarkably kind to animals. On one occasion a lady buried a favourite dog with all the honours due to a good Mussulman, and houseless cats are fed at the expense of the Cadi of the district.

† Apparently an attempt to write the name *msah*, still to be

account of the hippopotamus, no specimen of which he appears to have seen: He gives it the hoof of an ox, and the mane and neigh of a horse.

The sacred bird called the phoenix Herodotus confesses he never saw except in pictures. Indeed it was rare in Egypt, for it came but once in five hundred years, when the old phoenix died. According to the pictures, it was like an eagle, with plumage partly red and partly golden. The bird was said to come from Arabia, bringing the body of his father enclosed in a ball of myrrh, that he might bury it in the temple of the Sun. Our author did not seem to be acquainted with that other version of the phoenix fable, according to which it returned from the east after a stated period to burn itself in frankincense, and was again resuscitated. The phoenix was an emblem of the soul and its supposed migrations, and its journey to the east typified the constant aspiration of the soul towards the sun. Its period of migration referred to a solar cycle in the Egyptian calendar. Pliny says that the name was derived from a species of palm in Lower Egypt, which dies down to the root and then is renovated. Ovid makes the bird build its nest on a palm. In hieroglyphic language the palm-bough is the sign of the year.

Amongst other wonders, our author had heard of winged serpents, which flew across from Arabia, and was induced to undertake a journey to the country whence they came, where he says he saw some of their bones. The ibises were said to destroy them as they flew, which caused this bird to be held in great honour by the Egyptians. We are now in possession of the traced in the Arabic *temсах*.—See Sir G. Wilkinson's note, Rawlinson, ii. 116.

probable key to this enigmatical story, which illustrates both the simple faith and painstaking of our author, and also the manner in which myths grow out of the use of words. When scorpions or snakes appear in large numbers in the houses in Upper Egypt, they are supposed to be brought by the wind, and to all such objects an Arabic word is applied which signifies to fly. Herodotus doubtless saw pictures of a winged serpent attacked by the ibis, but this bird typified the god Osiris in the white robes of his purity, and the winged serpent probably the Evil principle. The ibis, however, is said to destroy snakes. His mention of the harmless horned snakes at Thebes, which were considered sacred, and buried in the temple, may suggest the prolific subject of primeval serpent-worship.

The description which Herodotus gives of the manners and customs of the Egyptians stamps them as a highly civilised people. In the reverence paid by young men to their elders, he considered that they set a good example to the Greeks. In the medical profession they recognised a minute division of labour, some being oculists, others dentists, and so forth.* Those who embalmed the dead (the "physicians" of the book of Genesis) formed a profession of themselves. He describes at length three methods of embalming (they had really many more), which were adopted in order to suit the means of their customers, as modern undertakers provide for funerals at different tariffs. Amongst other local peculiarities, Herodotus notices the lotus-eaters of the marsh-lands, who remind us of those described by Homer in the voyage of

* "O virgin, daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines."—Jer. xlv. 11.

Ulysses. But these latter—if they are to be identified at all—are to be recognised rather in the lotus-eating tribe whom our author mentions in a subsequent book as existing on the coast of Africa. Their lotus was probably a kind of jujube (*Zizyphus napeca*). The Egyptian lotus was a kind of water-lily, the centre of whose blossom was dried, crushed, and eaten, as also its round root. The seeds of another water-lily, whose blossoms were like a rose, were also eaten, as well as the lower stems of the byblus or papyrus, whose leaves were used for paper and other purposes. The mosquitoes were as great a nuisance in Egypt formerly as now. Herodotus says that some of the natives, to avoid them, slept on towers exposed to the wind; but in the marshes each man had a net, which served the double purpose of catching fish by day and acting as a mosquito-curtain at night.

For the early history of the country Herodotus had to depend upon his informants, who were usually the priests, especially those of Heliopolis—the Greek name by which he knew the oldest capital of Egypt, Êi-n-re, the On or Aon of the Hebrew Scriptures—the “City of the Sun.”* The college of priests there was in fact the university of Egypt; and whatever faith we may place in their historical records, their proficiency in mathematics and astronomy was very considerable indeed. They asserted that the first

* The “Aven” of Ezek. xxx. 17; translated into the Hebrew Beth-shemesh—“House of the Sun”—Jer. xliii. 13. The silt of the Nile has now covered most of its monuments and buildings, but its massive walls may still be traced, and a solitary granite obelisk, said to be near 4000 years old, marks what was the entrance to the temple of the Sun.

kings of Egypt were gods, "who dwelt upon earth with men." The last of this divine dynasty was Horus, son of Osiris—whom the Greeks identified with Apollo. The sufferings and death of Osiris were the great mystery of the Egyptian creed. Herodotus had seen his burial-place at Saïs, and knew the mysterious rites with which, under cover of night, these sufferings were commemorated. But he "will by no means speak of them," or even mention the god by name. Either the priests had enjoined secrecy upon him as the price of their information; or perhaps, being himself initiated in the Greek Mysteries, he had a scrupulous reverence for those of Egypt. Osiris was the great principle of Good, who slew his brother Typhon, the representative of Evil; and is pictured in the hieroglyphic paintings as the great judge of the dead. The first king of human race was Mên, or Menes, the founder of Memphis, who began a line of three hundred and thirty monarchs (including one queen), whose names were read off to Herodotus from a roll of papyrus. Eighteen were said to be Ethiopians. Of most of these kings the priests professed to know little more than the names; but Moëris, the last of them, left his name to a large artificial lake, or reservoir, near the "City of Crocodiles," from which water was conveyed to all parts of the neighbourhood. His successor, Sesostris, is said to have conquered all Asia, and even to have subdued Scythia and Thrace, in Europe, marking the limits of his conquests by pillars—two of which, in Palestine, Herodotus declares that he himself saw.* Sesostris, after his return from his

* There is little doubt that these are the tablets still to be seen near Beyrout.

conquests, met with somewhat too warm a welcome from his brother, whom he had left viceroy of Egypt. He invited the hero and his family to a banquet, heaped wood all round the building, and set fire to it. Sesostris only escaped by sacrificing (by the mother's advice) two of his six sons, whose bodies he used to bridge the circle of flame. Having inflicted condign punishment on his brother, he then proceeded to utilise the vast multitudes of captives whom he had brought with him. By the employment of this forced labour he changed the face of Egypt, completely intersecting it with canals, and filling it with public buildings of unparalleled magnificence. The second king after Sesostris bore a Greek name, but must be regarded as a very apocryphal personage—Proteus, who was said to have entertained at his court no less famous a visitor than Helen, the heroine of the Trojan war. For the Egyptian priests had their version, too, of that wondrous Tale. According to them, the Spartan princess was driven by stress of weather to Egypt on her forced elopement with Paris, while Troy was besieged by the Greeks, in the belief that she was there. King Proteus, when he heard the story, gave Helen refuge, but dismissed Paris at once with disgrace. Herodotus accuses Homer of knowing this legend, which was a more probable version of the story than his own, and suppressing it for poetical purposes, since he speaks of the long wanderings of Helen, and of Menelaus's visit to Egypt. The priests told him that their predecessors had the story from Menelaus himself, who went to Egypt to fetch Helen, when he found, after the capture of Troy, that she was not there. Herodotus himself saw in the sacred precincts at Memphis a temple to "Venus the

Foreigner," whom his Greek patriotism at once identified with Helen.

A story told at considerable length by Herodotus of the next king, Rhampsinitus, is highly characteristic, showing that sympathy of the Greek mind for clever rascality which recalls Homer's manifest enjoyment of the wily tricks of Ulysses in the 'Odyssey.' The story of "The Treasury of Rhampsinitus," which has been borrowed also by the Italian novelists, reads as if it were taken from the 'Arabian Nights.'

King Rhampsinitus, having vast treasure of silver, built for its safe keeping a chamber of hewn stone, one of whose walls formed also the outer wall of his palace. His architect, however, having designs on the treasure, built a stone into the wall, which even one man who knew the secret could easily displace. He did not live long enough to carry out his views, but on his deathbed explained the contrivance to his two sons, for whose sake, he said, he had devised it, that they might live as rich men, since the secret would make them virtual chancellors of the royal exchequer through their lives. After his death, the sons profited by his instructions to remove a considerable sum. The king, when next he came to visit the room, missed his money, finding it standing at a lower level in the vessels. This happened again and again, though the seals and fastenings of the room were as secure as ever. At last he set a man-trap inside. When the thieves next made their usual visit, one of them found himself suddenly caught. Seeing no hope of escape, he called to his brother to come and cut off his head, to prevent his being recognised. The brother obeyed; and, after replacing the stone, made his way home with the head. When the king

entered at day-break, he greatly marvelled to see a headless trunk in the gin, while the building seemed still to be fast closed all round. To find out to whom the body belonged, he ordered it to be hung outside the palace-wall, and set a guard to watch, and bring before him any persons they might observe lamenting over it. The mother of the dead man, hearing of this desecration of a corpse that should have been a mummy, told her surviving son that unless he contrived to rescue it, she would go and tell the king that he was the robber. Wearied with her continual reproaches, at last the brother filled some skins with wine, loaded them on asses, and drove them by the place where the guards were watching the dead body. Then he slyly untied the necks of some of the skins. The wine of course began to run out, upon which he fell to wailing and beating his head, as if distracted, and not knowing to which donkey he should run first to stanch the wine. This highly amused the guards, who ran eagerly to catch the wine in all the vessels they could lay hands on. Then the driver pretended to get into a passion, and abused them, upon which they did their best to quiet him. At last, appearing to be put in good-humour again by their raillery, he gave them one of the skins to drink. They invited him to help them with the drinking, as they had helped him in putting the skins in order. As the wine went round, all got more and more friendly, till they broached another skin, and at last the guards all got so drunk that they went to sleep on the spot. In the dead of the night the thief took down the body of his brother, laid it upon the asses, and made off, having first remained long enough to shave off the right whiskers of each of the men.

which was considered a deadly insult. When the king heard of this, he was more vexed than ever, and determined to find out the thief at any cost. He bade his daughter keep open house for all comers, and promise to marry the man who would tell her most to her satisfaction the cleverest and wickedest thing he had ever done. If any one told her the story of the robbery, she was to lay hold of him. But the thief was not to be thus outwitted. He procured a dead man's arm, put it under his dress, and went to call on the princess. When she put the question, he answered at once that the wickedest thing he had ever done was cutting off his brother's head in the king's treasury, and the cleverest was making the guards drunk, and carrying off his body. The princess made a grasp at him, but in the darkness he left the arm of the corpse in her hand and fled. But now the king was overwhelmed with astonishment and admiration for the man's cleverness, and made a proclamation of free pardon and a rich reward, if the thief would declare himself. He boldly came forward, and Rhampsinitus gave him his daughter in marriage. "The Egyptians," he said, "are the wisest of men, and thou art the wisest of the Egyptians."

Till the death of Rhampsinitus, Egypt enjoyed prosperity. Cheops, who succeeded him, and who built the Great Pyramid, is said to have shut up all the temples, that his people might do nothing but work for him; and he kept a hundred thousand labouring at a time, who were relieved every three months. It took ten years to make the causeway (of which traces still remain) for the conveyance of stones, and another twenty to build the Pyramid itself. The next kings,

Chephren and Mycerinus (Mencheres), likewise built pyramids, but on a smaller scale. The memory of Cheops and Chephren, in consequence of their oppressions, became so odious to the Egyptians, that they would not even mention their names; but upon Mycerinus, though he was just and merciful, there fell the punishment due for their sins. First he lost his only daughter, and then an oracle told him that he had but six years to live. He expostulated with the oracle, saying it was hard that he who was a good and righteous king should die early, while his father and uncle, who were so impious, lived long. The oracle answered—"For that very reason thou must die, for Egypt was destined to suffer ill for one hundred and fifty years, and thou hinderest the doom from being fulfilled." On this Mycerinus, finding it useless to be virtuous, determined to outwit the gods; so he lighted lamps at nightfall, and turned all the nights into days, and enjoyed them, as well as the days, in feasting in all pleasant places. Thus he lived twelve years in the space of six, making his six years one long day of continuous revel. The story of Mycerinus has been very happily treated in one of Matthew Arnold's earliest poems.*

"I will unfold my sentence and my crime;
My crime, that rapt in reverential awe,
I sate obedient, in the fiery prime
Of youth, self-governed, at the feet of Law,
Ennobling this dull pomp, the life of kings,
With contemplation of diviner things.

* Its moral—if it has any—may be found in Moore's song,

"And the best of all ways
To lengthen our days,
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear."

"My father loved injustice, and lived long ;
Crowned with grey hairs he died, and full of sway.
I loved the good he scorned, and hated wrong ;
The gods declare my recompense to-day.
I looked for life more lasting, rule more high—
And when six years are measured, lo, I die !"

After him came a blind king named Anysis, during whose reign Egypt was invaded by the Ethiopians, who lorded it over the country for fifty years. He was succeeded by Sethos, a priest of Vulcan, who oppressed the warrior caste, so that they refused to serve him when Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, invaded the country. But a vision in the sanctuary bid him be of good cheer ; and when he went out to the frontier with an army of citizens, trusting in divine aid, a number of field-mice came in the night and gnawed the bow-strings, quivers, and shield-straps of the enemy, so that the Egyptians easily defeated them. Such is the dim tradition which reached the historian of the mysterious destruction of the Assyrian host recorded in the Scriptures. The mouse, according to some interpreters of hieroglyphic language, was the symbol of destruction. Thus far Herodotus had derived his information as to early Egyptian history entirely from the priests. He computed that the reigns of these kings, as given him, would require eleven thousand three hundred and forty years.

A revolution seemed to have occurred after the death of Sethos, by which twelve provincial kings, like those of the Saxon Heptarchy, reigned at once. Their great work was a labyrinth near Lake Mœris, which struck Herodotus as one of the wonders of the world—more wonderful even than the Pyramids themselves. One of the twelve, Psammetichus, at length managed to

depose the rest by the aid of Greek mercenaries. His son, Nechos (Pharaoh Necho), is credited by Herodotus with the first attempt to construct the canal to the Red Sea, which was afterwards finished by Darius Hystaspes. The canal, however, was more probably begun by Sesostris (Rameses II.), and there appears to be evidence that it was choked by sand (which is still the difficulty with modern engineers), and reopened many times — by the Ptolemies, for instance, and the Arabs. Necho is mentioned in Scripture as having defeated and slain King Josiah at Megiddo on his way to attack the Assyrians. Herodotus briefly notices the victory, but calls the place Magdolus, after which he says that Necho took the city of Cadytis, supposed to be either Jerusalem or Gaza. In a subsequent expedition, which Herodotus does not mention, he himself was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and lost all his conquests. He was succeeded by his son Psammis, and his grandson Apries (the Pharaoh-Hophra of Jeremiah). The latter had a long and prosperous reign ; but failing in an attack on the Greek city of Cyrene, his army revolted from him, and chose Amasis, an officer who had been sent to reason with them, for their king. Apries on this armed his Greek mercenaries, amounting to thirty thousand men, and went to meet the revolted Egyptians. In the battle which ensued he was defeated and taken prisoner by Amasis, who finally gave him up to his former subjects, with whom he was unpopular, and they strangled him. Amasis was a coarse but humorous character, rather proud than otherwise of his low origin. Finding that his subjects despised him for it, he broke up a golden foot-bath, and made of it an image of one of the gods.

which the Egyptians proceeded to worship. He then told them what it was made of, adding that "his own fortune had been that of the foot-pan ;" thus anticipating the adage of Burns—

"The rank is but the guinea-stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that."

When his courtiers reproved his undignified revels in his hours of relaxation, whereas none could complain of his inattention to business, he met them with the proverb, now common to most languages, that a bow becomes useless if not sometimes unstrung. His habits were certainly open to remark. To find money for his pleasures before he came to the throne, he occasionally took to highway robbery. The oracular shrines were the police-offices of those times, and Amasis, like other thieves, was cited in such cases before the nearest oracle. Some of them would acquit, others find him guilty. When he became king, he honoured the oracles which had detected him very highly, but the others he despised. But he was a great king, in spite of his failings ; and Egypt is said to have prospered more under him than under any of his predecessors. One of his laws was, that every man should appear once a-year before the governor of his department, and prove, on pain of death, that he was getting an honest livelihood. Herodotus says that Solon borrowed this law from the Egyptians, and that it was in force at Athens up to his own days. If this be true, it fell into disuse soon after his time, as the Athenians enjoyed a reputation above all nations in the world for "gracefully going idle." We may at least join in his remark, that this ordinance of Amasis

was "a most excellent custom," towards which our modern civilisation is making timid approaches. We shall hear of this king again in connection with Polycrates, the despot of Samos.

The account which Herodotus here gives of the kings of Egypt, however interesting and entertaining, must be read with the full understanding that its value in a historical point of view is about the same as that of Livy's popular account of the early kings of Rome. He was unacquainted with the Egyptian language, and though the priests may not have purposely imposed upon him, he had to depend on the anecdotes which came to him through the medium of the caste of dragomans who were settled at Memphis. In consequence of this, the consecutiveness and general symmetry of his account only serves to conceal some palpable misstatements. Perhaps the greatest is that which makes the builders of the Pyramids later in time than the builders of the temples and other monuments. Modern investigations have tended to give great weight to the authority of a native chronicler, spoken of with much respect by early Christian writers, but who afterwards fell into disrepute—Manetho, the high priest in the days of Ptolemy Philadelphus. His record is utterly fatal to the main facts of the account given by Herodotus. After dynasties of gods and heroes which reigned more than sixteen thousand years, he brings us to the builders of the Pyramids, whom Herodotus places at a late period of his history, perhaps because his Greek informants first became acquainted with the monuments at Memphis itself. He was probably furnished with two distinct lists of kings, both to a great extent mythical, which he took to be separate and

successive dynasties. Cheops is almost certainly identical with Menes, the first human king of Herodotus, in whose time was effected the canalisation of the Delta. He is the traditional builder of the Great Pyramid, and Chemmis (the Sun) appears as one of his titles, at once connecting him with the sun-worship. The Pyramids are supposed to have been built before the time of Abraham, with the Pharaoh of whose times Achthoes of the 11th dynasty has been identified. The name Pharaoh itself continues the title assumed by Cheops, in its meaning of "children of the sun."

The Mycerinus of Herodotus is found to resolve himself into two kings, the Mencheres who built the Pyramids, and another much later king, of whom the story of turning night into day is told; a legend which may have originated in the torch-light festival of Osiris and Isis. Sesostris also resolves himself into two kings—Sethos, the great engineer and builder, and Rameses II., the great conqueror whose victories are recorded in the temples at Karnak and Luxor, and whose fallen statue at Luxor is the largest in the world. After him came Menephthes or Amenonoph, who has been identified with the Pharaoh of Exodus. The Shishak of Scripture has been confounded with Sesostris, but he came far too late, and is now identified with one Sesorchis. But the identification of any of these kings is as yet very uncertain.

Amongst other stories in the second book of Herodotus is one not quite presentable to the general reader, about a Greek beauty of doubtful repute, named Rhodôpis ("Rosy-cheek"), who had been brought as a slave to Egypt, and who was said to have built one of the Pyramids. Strabo embellishes her history by telling how, when this lady was bathing, an eagle carried off

one of her sandals, and deposited it before the king of Egypt's throne, who was so struck by the suggested beauty of the foot which it fitted, that he sent for her and made her his queen. Such is the venerable antiquity of the story of Cinderella.

It is remarkable that Herodotus says nothing about the Great Sphinx, which strikes all modern travellers so forcibly, and which plays so prominent a part in the legends of the Greek Thebes. He must have seen it, but may have thought it (as he did other things in this mysterious country) "too sacred to mention." Its composite form is supposed to be emblematic of Nature, and connected in some way with the inundations of the Nile.

This second book of Herodotus brings the history of Egypt as an independent power to a close. It is an inexhaustibly rich mine of historical, archæological, and mythological wealth, on whose endless shafts and galleries modern discovery is ever throwing some new light. Formerly the deciphering of the hieroglyphic writing, in which all Egyptian sacred records were kept, was looked upon as all but hopeless, but since the key was supplied by the discovery of the famous Rosetta stone, which bore a Greek translation of its hieroglyphic inscription, scientific patience has been abundantly rewarded. Religion is essentially conservative, and older dialects and characters are continued in her service long after they have been superseded in secular use. We may cite as an example the Church Slavonic dialect of the north, so valuable to philologists; the Sanscrit of India; the Latin still in use in the Roman Catholic ritual. Even in England we still use archaic characters for the inscriptions in our churches, but this is no doubt partly because of their greater picturesqueness.

CHAPTER IV.

CAMBYSES.

“The race of mortal Man is far too weak
To grow not dizzy on unwonted heights.”

—GOETHE, “Iphigenia.”

As soon after the death of Cyrus as the Persian arms were at liberty, we find them directed against Egypt. The former alliance of that country with Lydia might seem an adequate cause for the invasion, but it is too prosaic for the taste of Herodotus. He makes Cambyzes, the son of Cyrus, march against Amasis because he had practised on him a deceit something like that of Laban towards Jacob, by sending him as a wife the daughter of the late king, Apries, instead of his own. Cambyzes was, at all events, no safe subject for a practical joke, and Amasis might have found to his cost that he had jested once too often.

Having purchased a safe-conduct through the desert by swearing brotherhood with the chief of the Arabs,*—by a process much the same as that described by modern African travellers, which consisted in the contracting parties mixing a little of their blood,†—Cam-

* “The safe-conduct granted by the chief of the Bedouins,” says Kinglake, “is never, I believe, violated.”

† “Several of our men made brotherhood with the Wezecs, and

byses set out for Egypt. But death had put Amasis beyond the reach of all enemies, and his son Psammenitus now reigned in his stead. Dire misfortunes had been portended to the country by the unusual phenomenon of a shower of rain at Thebes. After an obstinate battle, Psammenitus was utterly routed. Herodotus went afterwards over the field, and saw there the bones of the Persians lying in one heap, and those of the Egyptians in another. He remarked that the skulls of the former might be broken by a pebble, while those of the latter resisted even a large stone. This observation he afterwards verified by personal inspection of another battle-field, where a Persian force was subsequently defeated by the revolted Egyptians under Inaros. He attributes the difference to the Egyptians going bareheaded in the sun, while the Persians wore turbans. The Persians followed up their victory by the capture of the city of Memphis and of Psammenitus himself, on which occasion our author introduces one of his characteristic pathetic stories. Cambyzes wishing, says Herodotus, "to try the spirit" of his royal prisoner, ordered Psammenitus and some of the captive the process between Bombay and the sultan's son, Keerenga, may be mentioned. My consent having been given, a mat is spread, and a confidential party or surgeon attends on each. All four squat, as if to have a game at whist; before them are two clean leaves, a little grease, and a spear-head; a cut is made under the ribs of the left side of each party, a drop of blood put on a leaf and exchanged by the surgeons, who rub it with butter twice into the wound with the leaf, which is now torn in pieces and strewn over the "brothers'" heads. A solemn address is made by the older of the attendants, and they conclude the ceremony by rubbing their own sides with butter, shaking hands, and wishing each other success."—Grant's *Walk through Africa*, p. 108.

nobles to be brought out to the gates of the city. Then he caused the deposed king's daughter, and those of the nobles, to be led past, in the dress of slaves, carrying pitchers on their heads. The nobles wept at the sight, but Psammenitus only bowed his head. Next followed his son and two thousand other young Egyptians, going to execution with ropes round their necks. The people of Memphis had torn limb from limb the crew of a ship which Cambyses had sent with a summons to surrender, and this was his reprisal—ten for every man murdered. The nobles again wept and wailed loudly, but Psammenitus comported himself as before. But when he saw one of his former boon companions, an old man now reduced to beggary, asking alms from the soldiers, then his grief broke forth in tears, and he beat himself on the head. Cambyses was amazed that he should weep at the fate of his friend, and not at that of his daughter or son, and sent to ask him the reason of his strange conduct. Psammenitus answered, "O son of Cyrus, mine own misfortunes were too great for tears." Cambyses was sufficiently touched to order the life of the young prince to be spared, but the reprieve came too late. But from that time Psammenitus was treated better, and might, as Herodotus thinks, had he shown more tact, have been appointed governor of Egypt, since it was the Persian custom thus to honour fallen princes, even giving the kingdoms of rebel vassals to their sons.* But he was unwise enough to plot rebel-

* We have notable instances of this habit in Eastern monarchs recorded in Scripture. Jehoiakim is made king instead of his brother Jehoahaz, by Pharaoh-Nechoh (2 Kings xxiii. 34) ; Mattaniah instead of his nephew Jehoiachin, by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxiv. 17).

lion, and Cambyses, discovering this, put him to death.

And now the son of Cyrus entered on that career of impiety which was certain to have an evil end. He had the body of his enemy Amasis, who had escaped his vengeance while living, torn from its tomb, scourged, and committed to the flames—an act horrible to the Persians, who worshipped fire; horrible to the Egyptians, who looked upon that element as a devouring monster to whom it was impious to give their dead. Then, according to Greek poetical justice, he was seized by infatuation. He planned wild expeditions—one against “the Long-lived” Ethiopians, who dwelt far away to the south, and who might perhaps be identified with the modern Abyssinians (Heeren thinks, with the Somalis) by certain characteristics, such as tall stature, regular though black features, and a great love of animal food. Whoever they were, they are the subject of one of our author’s most characteristic narratives. Cambyses sent envoys to them—men of the tribe of “Fish-eaters,” who knew their language—with presents for their king; a purple robe, a collar and armlets of gold, and a cask of palm-wine, tokens of his goodwill, as “the things in which he himself most delighted.” The Ethiopian king—who was elected for his stature and beauty—made answer almost in the words of Joseph to his brethren: “Surely to search out the land are ye come hither.” He asked how the purple robe was made; and when they explained the mystery of the dye, he said that the Persians’ garments, like themselves, were deceitful. When told the purpose of the golden collar and armlets, he chose to consider them as fetters, and remarked that

“the Ethiopians made them stronger.” In fact, as Herodotus declares, the envoys saw men afterwards in prison actually wearing fetters of a metal which was there so plentiful. Only the wine he highly approved of, and asked what the king of Persia ate, and how long men lived in that country. When he heard that corn was the staple food, and that it grew out of the earth, and that eighty years was considered a long life, he replied that he did not wonder at the king’s dying so young if he “ate dirt,” and that nothing, he was persuaded, could keep him alive even so long, except that excellent liquor. He sent back in return an unstrung bow, with advice that, when the Persians could find a man to bend it, they should then think of attacking the “Long-livers.”

Against this distant tribe, however, the Persian king set out with a vast army, without bestowing a thought on his commissariat. Before he had accomplished a fifth of the distance the provisions failed, but he still pushed on. The army fed on the sumpter-beasts till they were exhausted; then on herbs and grass, till they came to the sandy desert, where vegetation ended. At last, when he heard of cannibalism in the ranks, Cambyses thought it was time to return; but he succeeded in bringing back only a small remnant of his host. Another expedition, sent against the temple of Ammon, in the great Oasis, fared even worse, for no news came of it more. It perished, our author thinks, in a sandstorm—more probably from want of water. But Cambyses’ heart was hardened. When he returned from his ill-starred march, he found the Egyptians holding high festival. This greatly incensed him, for he thought they were rejoicing at

his defeat. But they were innocently celebrating the incarnation of their national god Apis or Epaphus, who was said to appear from time to time in the similitude "of a calf that eateth hay," and whose "avatar" in that form was denoted by certain sacred marks known to his priests. Cambyses was still more angry when he heard the real cause of this national jubilee : he had the priests scourged all round, forbade the people to rejoice on pain of death, and, to crown all, fell on the sacred beast and wounded him with his dagger, so that he pined away and died. From this precise date, as the Egyptians averred, the madness of Cambyses took a more decided character. But his acts, however unaccountable to a Greek mind, seem to have been little more than those of an Eastern despot of fierce passions and naturally cruel disposition. First he had his brother Smerdis put to death, and then he killed his sister because she mourned for Smerdis. He had sent this brother back to Persia because he excited his jealousy by being the only Persian who could just move the Ethiopian's bow ; and then, having dreamed that he saw Smerdis sitting on his throne and touching heaven with his head, he sent a nobleman named Prexaspes to Susa, who slew him according to his instructions. The story of the murder of the sister was differently told by the Persians and Egyptians. The former said that Cambyses, in the presence of his sister, had set a puppy to fight a lion-cub. The dog was getting the worst of it, when another of the same litter broke the cord that tied him, and came "to help his brother," and both of them together mastered the young lion. Cambyses was amused, but his sister wept, and said that she could not but think of Smerdis, who had no brother

to help him. For this speech he killed her. The Egyptians said that the pair were seated at table, when the sister took a lettuce, and, stripping its leaves off, asked Cambyses whether it looked better with its leaves off or on? He answered, "With its leaves on." "Then why," said she, "didst thou strip of its leaves the stem of Cyrus?" A furious kick which followed this remark was the cause of her death. In fact, Cambyses had now become dangerous to all about him. Cræsus, whom he had brought with him to Egypt, had more than one narrow escape. On one occasion officers were sent to put him to death, but they, knowing their master's moods, only pretended to have done it, and produced Cræsus alive as soon as Cambyses was heard to regret the order. He was well pleased that his friend had not been killed, but the disobedience cost the guards their lives. Another time he shot the son of Prexaspes through the heart to prove the steadiness of his hand, merely because the father had told him, in answer to a question, that the Persians said he was rather too fond of wine. Probably for some similar offensive remark he buried up to their necks twelve of his nobles—a cruel process still practised in the East under the name of "tree-planting." * And he grew more and more profane. He opened tombs and unrolled mummies like a modern

* "Feti-Ali-Shah once sent for Astra-chan, one of his courtiers, and with an appearance of great friendship took him round his garden, showing him all its beauties. When he had finished the circuit, he appealed to Astra-chan to know 'what his garden still lacked?' 'Nothing,' said the courtier; 'it is quite perfect.' 'I think differently,' replied the king; 'I must decidedly plant a tree in it.' Astra-chan, who knew the king's meaning only too well, fell at his feet and begged his life, which he obtained only at the price of surrendering to the king the lady to whom he was betrothed."—Rawlinson, ii. 361, note.

virtuoso. He made sport of the pigmy images of Pthah, or Vulcan, whose ludicrous ugliness must have presented the grim humorist with an irresistible temptation,* and other sacred idols he burnt. Herodotus expresses himself much shocked at all this; but he might have known that the Persians were in general iconoclasts. It is possible that Cambyses was inspired with the same destructive zeal which induced the more modern Puritans to clear away the saints from the niches of our cathedrals. But as a Greek, our author would sympathise with the Egyptians. It is hard for us to judge how far some of the cruelties reported of Cambyses may have been the invention of the outraged priests. He has recorded, in another part of his work, an anecdote which illustrates at once the character of Cambyses and the general incorruptibility of the royal judges of Persia. One of these, named Sisamnes, was found to have accepted bribes. Cambyses, with the facetious cruelty so common to tyrants of his type, had him flayed, and his skin stretched over the seat which he had occupied while administering the law. He then appointed his son to the vacant post, charging him at the same time never to forget "on what kind of cushion he was sitting."

The modern reader will agree with Herodotus that it is at least right to treat with delicacy the peculiar usages of others. Aristotle quotes one of his anecdotes to illustrate the opinion of those who held that all right and wrong were conventional. King Darius Hystaspes called certain Greeks into his presence, and asked them what they would take to eat their dead fathers? They said that they would do it for

* See the woodcuts and note, Rawlinson, ii. 434.

no consideration whatever. Then he asked a certain tribe of Indians what they would take *not* to eat the bodies of their fathers, but to burn them like the Greeks? They cried aloud, and begged him not to blaspheme. So Sir John Lubbock, in his 'Prehistoric Times,' relates that the Tahitians think it indecent to dine in company; and that as soon as a child is born he is accounted the head of his family, and takes precedence of his father. And the tyranny of public opinion in matters indifferent, of which we complain so often, finds its strongest exemplification among the semi-brutal savages of Australia.

The death of Smerdis had come to the knowledge of but few persons in Persia, and while Cambyzes was absent in Egypt, the priest-caste of the Magi made a bold attempt at a revolution. It is probable that under Cyrus and Cambyzes this caste, with their peculiar tenets, had been discouraged. A certain Magian, who was a kind of groom of the palace, had a brother who resembled greatly the dead Smerdis, and who (according to Herodotus) bore the same name.* Patizethes seated this brother on the throne, and sent out a proclamation that henceforth all men were to do homage to Smerdis the son of Cyrus, and no longer to Cambyzes. When Cambyzes heard of this, he thought that Prexaspes had not done his errand, and that it was really his brother Smerdis who had revolted against him; but Prexaspes satisfied him that his orders had been duly executed, and that this

* The Behistun inscription gives the name as Gomates, and does not speak of two brothers. Mr Rawlinson seems to prove clearly that the revolution was a religious one, though nothing to that effect appears in Herodotus.—See his Essay, iii. 548.

was a usurper personating the dead prince. He was at once struck by remorse, seeing that his fratricide had been useless, for his dream was so far fulfilled that a man called Smerdis sat on his throne; and he prepared to march at once in person to Susa to quell the rebellion. As he was mounting his horse, the knob of his sword-sheath fell off, and the bare point of the weapon pierced his thigh, exactly as he had pierced with his dagger the god Apis. His wound brought him to his senses, and he solemnly conjured the Persian nobles to prevent the empire from passing to the Medes, confessing that he had killed his brother Smerdis, and that therefore the present occupant of the throne must be an impostor. The wounded limb soon mortified, and Cambyses died in Egypt, leaving no issue. Before his death, he asked the name of the village where he lay. He was answered that it was called "Ecbatana." Then he knew that he should die; for an oracle had long ago predicted that he should die at Ecbatana,—which he naturally took to be his own town in Media. The coincidence with the death of our own Henry IV. in the "Jerusalem chamber" is very curious.

"It hath been prophesied to me many years
I should not die but in Jerusalem,
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land;—
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie,—
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die." *

* 'Henry IV.,' Part 2, Act iv. sc. 4.

CHAPTER V

DARIUS.

“ In the theatre of the World
The people are actors all.
One doth the sovereign monarch play ;
And him the rest obey.”—CALDERON.

THE jealous hatred which Cambyses bore to his brother Smerdis was so well known, that the Persians did not believe his dying declaration that the person who had seized his throne was an impostor. They accepted him as the true Smerdis, son of Cyrus. Such impostures are possible enough in a credulous age. A false Demetrius plays an important part in the history of Russia. There were many who disbelieved the fact of the two English princes having been smothered in the Tower ; and many more, at quite a recent date, have believed that Louis XVII. escaped his jailers, and grew up to manhood. The secluded life of an Eastern monarch would give such an imposture additional chances of success.

The Magian usurper reigned for eight months under the name of Smerdis, giving great satisfaction to most of his subjects, for under him “ the empire was peace.” He remitted the heaviest taxes, and enforced no mili-

tary conscription. At last his imposture came to light. Otanes, a Persian nobleman, whose daughter was one of his wives, was informed by her that her husband had no ears. Now the Magian was known to have lost his for some offence in the time of Cyrus.* The result of this revelation was, that Otanes headed the famous conspiracy of the seven nobles, of whom Darius, the son of Hystaspes, sprung from a collateral branch of the royal family, and probably the next legal heir, was one. While they were concocting their plan of attack, a tragical event happened which made immediate action necessary. The Magians, knowing how cruelly Prexaspes had been treated by Cambyses,† thought it their interest to conciliate him, and prevailed upon him to mount on a tower of the palace-wall, and make a speech to the people below, who had grown suspicious, to the effect that their present king was the true Smerdis, the son of Cyrus. But in this they made as fatal a mistake as Shakespeare's Brutus and Cassius did when they allowed Mark Antony to speak at Cæsar's funeral. Prexaspes, instead of lying to please the Magians, proclaimed aloud the real state of the case, and then threw himself from the tower, and was killed on the spot.

* This is the mildest form of mutilation, as the feature seems more ornamental than useful, except to those savage tribes in whom the muscle that moves the ear is developed. It was practised in England as late as the seventeenth century, for such offences as Nonconformity, Petty Treason, Libel, and the like. Prynne is a well-known instance. It is common now in Africa, and is said to give the head the look of a barber's block, but to be attended with no great inconvenience. The False Smerdis, as has been said, never went abroad, and probably wore his turban low on his head.

† See p. 71.

The seven conspirators gained the presence of the false king and his brother with no great difficulty, but within they met with such resistance that two were badly wounded before they succeeded in despatching them. The others cut off the Magians' heads, carried them forth, and showed them to the populace. A general massacre of the Magian caste followed, which lasted till the night. Few of them survived this St Bartholomew of Susa. During the annual festival held henceforth under the name of Magophonia, which we might call the "Median Vespers," none of the hated class dared be seen abroad, though tolerated at other times.

The seven noblemen, according to Herodotus, now resolved themselves into a debating society, for the purpose of discussing different forms of government. That is to say, he here avails himself of an author's favourite licence to propound theories of his own. His sympathies are plainly with democracy, but historical exigencies obliged him to admit that monarchy was adopted. They agreed that one of the seven should be king, and the rest his peers, having free access to the royal presence on all but certain stated occasions. It was then arranged that all should ride their horses to an open place at sunrise, and choose as king the man whose horse was the first to neigh. This was really an appeal to the Sun, to whom the horse was sacred. The omen fell to Darius, by the cunning management of his equerry, and he was at once hailed as king. When he was established in the kingdom, he is said to have set up the figure of a man on horseback, with a commemorative inscription. The story may have been invented subsequently, to account for this work of art, as often happens.

Most valuable light has been thrown on the history of Darius by the discovery of the great Behistun inscription. On the western frontier of the ancient Media there is a precipitous rock 1700 feet high, which forms a portion of the Zagros chain, separating the table-land of Iran from the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. The inscription can only be reached with difficulty, as it is 300 feet from the base of the rock. It is in three languages, — old Persian, Babylonian, and Scythian,—executed, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, in the fifth year of Darius, B.C. 516. The wedge-shaped letters of the Persian copy were deciphered with infinite pains by this great archæologist. Darius mentions in it, under the name of Gaumata, a Magian who personated Bardes * (as he calls him), the son of Cyrus, and says that he slew him by the help of Ormuzd, the Good Spirit, and thus recovered an empire that belonged to his own family, restoring to the Persians the religion which they had lost by the Magian intrusion. He also records that after this he was engaged in quelling a general revolt of the provinces. The main facts accord with those of Herodotus, though there is some difference in the nomenclature. The end of the inscription invokes a curse on any one who might injure it, and this has probably tended to preserve it; just as the curse on Shakespeare's monument, at Stratford-on-Avon, may have conducted

* The *s*, whether at the beginning or end of Persian names, is commonly only a Greek addition. So Bardy(a)—the vowel being pronounced though not written—is Smerdis, Gaumat(a) becomes Gomates, Vashtasp(a) Hystaspes, &c.—See Rawlinson, I. 27-29, note.

to prevent officious veneration from "moving his bones."

Darius was the first monarch of Persia who regulated the revenues, and assigned the sum that each satrapy ought to pay to the royal treasury. This caused the haughty Persian aristocracy to say of him, in their contempt for red tape, that Cyrus had been a father to the state, Cambyses a master, but Darius was "a huckster, who would make a gain of everything."

There can be no question that Herodotus had access, either personally or through friends, to the royal records of Persia, or copies of them. He gives a complete list of the various satrapies into which the empire was divided, of the several subject nations which it comprised, and the form and amount of their tribute. The Persians themselves, it must be remarked, like the Magyar grandees in Hungary formerly, were exempt from taxation, and only bound to military service. He says that the Indians, the most numerous race of all, paid into the royal treasury three hundred and sixty talents in gold dust, and that the whole annual revenue was computed at fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty talents, besides a fraction—more than three millions and a half of our money. But it must be considered that this corresponds to the modern Civil List, serving only to defray the expenses of the Court. These Indians must not be supposed to be those of the Peninsula, but rather those of Scinde and the Punjab. The gold which they brought into the royal treasury was said to come from a great desert to the eastward. In this desert there were ants—"bigger than foxes"—and in their hills the gold was found. To procure it the gold-hunters took camels, chiefly

females with young ones, with which they proceeded to the place at the hottest time of day, when the ants were in their holes, filled their bags with the auriferous sand, and then hurried back to escape the pursuit of the ants; the female camels leading the way, as anxious to get back to their young ones. The existence of these gigantic ants has been asserted by comparatively modern travellers, but it seems probable that they must have been really ant-eaters, which burrowed in the hills, and which some informants of Herodotus may have seen.

Amongst the barbarian tribes in dependence on Persia, he mentions one called the Padæans, who, like the Massagetæ before mentioned, allowed none of their sick to die a natural death. The horrible story is quaintly told. "If a man is taken ill, the men put him to death to prevent his flesh being spoiled by his malady. He protests loudly that he never felt better in his life; but they kill and eat him notwithstanding. So, if a woman is ill, the women who are her friends do to her in like manner. (The decent division of the sexes is worth remarking.) If any one reaches old age—a very uncommon occurrence, for he can only do so on condition of never having been ill—they sacrifice him to the gods, and afterwards eat him." Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, writing about 1500, found the practice existing in Sumatra, where the relations assembled in the sick man's house, suffocated him, and then ate him, as he describes it, "in a convivial manner." Among other wonders he mentions Arabian sheep (the forefathers, no doubt, of our "Cape" breed) which had tails three cubits long, for which the shepherds made little trucks to keep them off the ground

—“each sheep having a truck of his own.” The mention of remarkable countries and productions leads Herodotus to observe that, while the Greeks have the finest climate, as inhabiting the middle of the earth, yet the farthest inhabited regions have the finest productions—tin, amber, and gold coming, for instance, from the ends of the earth; but in respect of horses he gives the palm to the Nisæan breed of Media. Palgrave, in his *Travels in Arabia*, speaks of the horses of Nedjid as the “cream of the cream” of equine aristocracy.

Soon after the accession of Darius, one of his seven fellow-conspirators, Intaphernes, got into trouble. He insisted on seeing the king during his hours of privacy, and being denied, cut off the noses and ears of two of the palace officials, and hung them round their necks. This displeased the king so much that he condemned Intaphernes and all the males of his family to death. But Darius was touched with pity by the lamentations of the wife of Intaphernes, and allowed her to choose which of her family she would save. She chose her brother—explaining, when the king showed some astonishment at her selection, that such a loss could not possibly be replaced, her father and mother being dead. Pleased with her wit, Darius gave her the life of her eldest son into the bargain. Sophocles adopts the same curious sentiment in his tragedy of *Antigone*. The general justice of Darius would lead to the suspicion that the crime of Intaphernes was of the nature of high treason, otherwise his family would hardly have been involved in his punishment.

The story of Democedes, a famous surgeon of Crotona, who was brought to Persia as a slave, is intro-

duced by Herodotus to find a motive for the attention of the king being called to Greece. He had abundant reasons besides, as the history shows ; but our author will not desert the theory of his choice, that Woman is the mainspring in all human affairs. Democedes had got into favour at court by successful treatment first of Darius himself, then of Atossa the favourite sultana. For this latter service he obtained leave to name his own reward,—it was, to be allowed to visit his home ; and, as Darius wished also to conquer Greece, in order that Atossa's desire of having some of “those Lacedæmonian handmaidens of whom she had heard so much” might be gratified, Democedes was sent to make the tour of Greece and its colonies on the Italian coast with a party of spies. When he reached his native Crotona, he chose to remain there, and was assisted by his fellow-townsmen against the Persians who tried to take him back with them. He bade the latter tell Darius that he was about to be married to the daughter of Milo the wrestler ; wishing the king to know that he was a man of some mark in his own country, where—as in some cases amongst us moderns—athletics ranked even higher than science. These spies were said to have been the first Persians who visited Greece.

But Darius had no time to think of Greece just then, as his hands were full with a revolt in Babylonia and other provinces, which appears to have assumed larger proportions than those known to Herodotus. Samos was the first state which was unfortunate enough to draw upon itself the might of the Persian arms. The cause of this war was a cloak. When Cambyses was in Egypt with his army, one

Syloson, brother of Polycrates of Samos, was also there in exile. He appeared one day at Memphis in a scarlet cloak, to which Darius, who was then a plain officer of the royal guards, took a fancy, and asked the wearer to name his price. Syloson, in a fit of generosity, begged him to accept it as a present; and it had no sooner been accepted than he repented of his good-nature. As matters turned out, the cloak of Syloson became as famous as that of Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh "spoilt a cloak and made a fortune," by spreading out his for Queen Elizabeth to walk on; Syloson, by giving his away, led the way to the ruin of his country. For when Darius came to the throne, Syloson introduced himself at court as the hero of the cloak, and Darius asked him what he could do for him in return. He requested to be put in possession of his late brother's dominion in Samos. Mæandrius, the secretary of Polycrates, who was at present in possession, was a man who had had greatness thrust upon him. When Polycrates was murdered, the secretary found himself in possession of Samos; and wishing to be "the justest of men," set up an altar to the god of Freedom, stipulating only that he should be appointed its high priest as a condition of his establishing democracy. Finding, however, that the "Irreconcilables" of the period intended to prosecute him for embezzlement, he had repented of his republican generosity, and made himself master of the citadel and city. Darius now sent out an expedition which put his friend Syloson in possession of the island, but not without an insurrection; which led to a terrible massacre of the people.

Babylon, according to the Behistun inscription, re-

volted from Darius twice—once in the first and again in the fourth year of his reign. It is difficult to identify with either of these occasions the revolt now mentioned by Herodotus. According to his account,—which in this instance must be regarded rather as romance than history—so determined was the attempt, that the Babylonians strangled most of their women, in order to reduce their population, in preparation for the expected siege. Darius soon sat down before the city, but the walls defied his utmost power; and the besieged began to jeer the Persians, telling them that “they would never take the city until mules foaled.” However, in the twentieth month of the siege, a mule belonging to Zopyrus, a Persian of rank, did foal—an event perhaps not physically impossible; and Zopyrus thought that there must have been something providential in the taunt of the Babylonians, and that now the city might be taken. The sequel, whether true or not in an historical sense, is singularly illustrative of the chivalrous self-devotion of the Persian nobility in the interests of their monarch. Zopyrus proceeded to cut off his own nose and ears, clipt his hair close, got himself scourged, and in that state presented himself to Darius, and laid his plan before him.* Darius was greatly shocked at his retainer’s maltreatment of himself, but as it was too late to mend the matter, made the proposed arrangement. Zopyrus was to pretend to desert to the Babylonians, telling them that Darius had so ill-used him because he had advised him to raise the siege. The Babylonians would probably believe him, and intrust

* The town of Gabii, according to Livy, was taken by the Romans by a very similar stratagem.

him with the command of a division. Darius must then be willing to sacrifice a few thousands of his worst soldiers to give the Babylonians confidence in Zopyrus, who, when he had the game safe in his hands, would open the gates to the Persian army. All turned out according to the programme. Zopyrus admitted the Persians, who took the city. Darius did his best to destroy the formidable walis, and had three thousand of the leading rebels impaled ; but not wishing to depopulate the city, procured from the neighbouring nations fifty thousand women to make up for those whom the Babylonians had sacrificed. As for Zopyrus, the king loaded him with honours and made him governor of Babylon ; but he was wont to say,—more scrupulous than Henry IV. of France, who changed his religion to procure the surrender of the capital, thinking Paris “ well worth a mass,”—that he would rather have Zopyrus unmutilated than be master of twenty Babylons.

CHAPTER VI.

SCYTHIA.

“They dwell
In wattled sheds on rolling cars aloft,
Accoutred with far-striking archery.”
— ÆSCHYLUS, “Prometheus.”

HAVING disposed of Babylon, Darius next bethought himself of the Scythians. He had an old national grudge against this restless race, for having overrun Asia in the days of Cyaxares the Mede. The Behistun inscription only mentions the quelling of a revolt of the Sacæ, or Scythian subjects of Persia; but Herodotus speaks of an expedition on a vast scale against the independent nation.

The Scythians were, according to Herodotus, a people whose seat was in the steppes of northern Russia, more widely spread than the present Cossacks of the Don, but without any definite boundaries, sometimes encroaching on their neighbours and sometimes encroached upon by them, like the Tartar hordes at this day. Their name has been supposed by some to be a synonym for “archers.” Their habits were very like those of the terrible Huns and Magyars who overran part of Europe in the last agonies of

Rome and afterwards ; but the difficulty of identifying a modern and civilised race with an ancient and barbarous one, is shown by the dissimilarity of the handsome and chivalrous Hungarians with their hideous and unkempt progenitors. They seem to have inherited from them little besides their love of horse-flesh—in the civilised sense.

That the Scythians disappeared from history, when history itself was at its lowest ebb, is no proof that they exist nowhere now. Their language, specimens of which are given by Herodotus, undoubtedly belongs to that of the Indo-Germanic family. Their connection with the Sacæ is established. Some connect the Sacæ with the Saxons, others also with the Sikhs of northern India. It would indeed be strange if it were discovered from critical philology and archæology that the English were pitted against their cousins at Sobraon, Chilianwallah, and Gujerat, and recovered India through their aid afterwards ; and that some of our Saxon ancestors were those who fought best on the losing side at Marathon and Platæa. Certain it is that nearly all the now dominant races of mankind seem to have swarmed, at longer or shorter intervals, from some mysterious hive about or beyond the Caucasus. History records some of the waves of their western or eastern progress. Before the Scythians came a swarm of Cimmerians, sweeping over Asia Minor in the time of the predecessors of Cræsus. Their name is still retained in the Crimea and Krim Tartary. They reappear as Cimbri in the latter days of the Roman republic, to which they were very near giving the finishing stroke. Then they are heard of in Schleswick and Jutland, and in Wales it is just possible that at

the present day they call themselves Cymry. Before their coming a horde of Celts or Gauls had fallen on Rome, and another invaded Greece later on, leaving permanent settlements in Lombardy and Asia Minor.

In earlier history these tidal waves of population came at long intervals, so that the damage they did was reparable, and the silt they left behind them only strengthened the ground ; but in the latter days of the Roman Cæsars, they succeeded one another so quickly that the Empire was swamped, and when the disturbance had subsided, the earth wore a face that was strange and new. The repentant sons of those savage children of the night, calling themselves English, French, Germans, and so forth, are now endeavouring to atone for their fathers' delinquencies by painfully diving after the relics of lost civilisations, and preserving whatever they can find with religious veneration for the use and delight of ages to come. By degrees we are opening up Greece, Italy, Assyria, Persia, India, Egypt, and discovering to our dismay that much of our boasted civilisation is but a parody on what prevailed centuries or millenniums ago ; and that, with all our culture, we have still much barbarism to unlearn.

The Scythians described by Herodotus, like the Parthians who defeated the Roman legions, are a race of archers on horseback. From them the Greeks may have derived their fables of the Centaurs. As a pastoral people, they were generally averse to the tillage of land, and moved about with their herds from one feeding-ground to another, carrying their skin-covered huts on carts. That the Sarmatians were allied with them appears from the fable which traces their descent to the union of Scythians with Amazons, those wonder

ful viragos whose manlike habits are still kept up by the women of some Tartar tribes.

To account for the origin of the Scythians, Herodotus gives two fables. According to one, a certain Targitæus, a son of Jupiter, and grandson by his mother's side of the river Borysthenes or Dnieper, was the first man in Scythia. He had three sons. At first they were all equal, when there fell from heaven four implements of gold—a plough, a yoke, a battle-axe, and a goblet. The eldest approached to take them, when they broke out into flames, and he durst not touch them. The second was rejected in like manner. The youngest fared better: he was able to handle the gold and to carry it off. This was a sign that he should be the king.* From the three

* A somewhat similar story was told to Speke by Rumanika, king of Karaguè.

“Before their old father Dagara died, he had unwittingly said to the mother of Rogero, although he was the youngest born, ‘what a fine king he would make;’ and the mother in consequence tutored him to expect to succeed, although primogeniture is the law of the land, subject to the proviso, which was also the rule with the ancient Persians, that the heir must have been born after his father's accession, which condition was here fulfilled in the case of all three brothers. . . . Rumanika maintained that Rogero was entirely in the wrong, not only because the law was against him, but the judgment of heaven also. On the death of the father, the three sons, who only could pretend to the crown, had a small mystic drum placed before them by the officers of state. It was only feather-weight in reality, but being loaded with charms, became too heavy for those not entitled to the crown to move. Neither of the other brothers could move it an inch, while Rumanika easily lifted it with his little finger. . . . He (Rumanika) moreover said that a new test had been invented in his case besides the ordeal of lifting the drum. The supposed rightful heir had to plant

brothers sprang the three Scythian tribes—the “Royal” Scythians from the youngest. According to the other legend, which emanated from a Greek source, Hercules, when he was carrying off the cattle of Geryon (who lived on an island near Cadiz in Spain), came to Scythia, and being overcome by frost and fatigue, wrapt himself in his lion’s skin, and fell asleep. When he awoke his team of mares had disappeared. He wandered in quest of them till he came to a country called the Bush. Here he found in a cave a strange being, half woman, half serpent, who detained him with her by holding out hopes of his recovering his mares, which she had caught and hidden.* Three sons were the

himself on a certain spot, when the land on which he stood would rise up like a telescope drawn out till it reached the skies. If he was entitled to the throne, it would then let him down again without harm ; but if otherwise, collapse and dash him to pieces. Of course as he survived the trial, it was successful. On another occasion a piece of iron was found in the ground, about the shape and size of a carrot. This iron could not be extracted by any one but Rumanika himself, who pulled it up with the greatest ease.”—‘Lake Victoria ;’ a compilation from the Memoirs of Captains Speke and Grant.

* These legends of serpent-women are not uncommon in German mythology. The following adventure is related by the brothers Grimm : “One Leonhard, who was a stammerer, but a good fellow, and of irreproachable morals, lost his way one day as he was visiting some underground vaults of the nature of catacombs. All at once he found himself in a delicious meadow, in the midst of which was playing a young girl, half concealed by the herbage. She invited him to come and rest by her side. Leonhard, out of pure politeness, obeyed her eagerly, and then became aware of a fact which the long grass had at first prevented his observing,—that the damsel, the upper part of whose body was white and beautiful, terminated below in a scaly and serpent-like tail. He wished to fly, but his legs

result of this strange intimacy—one called Agathyrus, the other Gelonus, the other Scythes. Hercules, on his departure, left with the mother a bow, and a belt with a goblet attached to it. The son who could bend the bow was to inherit the land, the others to emigrate. Scythes, the youngest, bent the bow, and remained to be the father of the kings of Scythia, which accounted for the Scythian custom of wearing a goblet attached to the girdle.

In describing the geography of Scythia, of which were immediately caught and embraced by her tail. Thus forced to listen, he now heard the poor creature's history. She was born a princess, and was enjoying court society, when a malicious enchanter charmed her into her present state, from which she could only be released on one condition, and that was, that she could prevail on some fair young man, who must be perfectly innocent, to give her three kisses. The youth must not be older than twenty-two. There was time for Leonhard to have fulfilled the conditions, for he would be twenty-three on that very day—in two hours more. But, unfortunately, he stammered, and the two hours were almost gone before he had made the necessary preliminary statement as to his birth. Then he gave her the first kiss. Upon that she was seized with violent convulsions, and rolled so wildly on the grass that he fled in alarm. He was, however, recalled by her supplications and promises, and gave her the second kiss. The effect of this was still more electric than that of the first. Her eyes burned like fire, she sprang up, her face glowed and her cheeks seemed bursting; she whirled about like a demoniac, and hissed, shrieked, and yelled like a very Melusina. Frightened out of his wits, the youth rushed away through the meadow and catacombs till the hideous object was out of sight; but after a time, reflecting that he might have made his fortune and married a princess, he turned to go back once more. It was too late; for, to his unspeakable chagrin, he just then heard a village clock strike twelve, which made him twenty-three years of age.—X. R. Saintine, '*La Mythologie du Rhin*' (free translation).

Herodotus probably knew no more than he may have heard at the Greek factory at Olbia (near the site of the modern Kinburn), he is carried away by the interest of his subject, and launches out into a geographical digression, chiefly entertaining as a record of ancient notions, and as showing how facts become altered in passing from mouth to mouth. The "Scythia" of Herodotus seems to embrace "the basins of the Don, Dnieper, Dniester, and Boug, and the northern half of that of the Lower Danube"*—*i.e.*, a great portion of Russia, Bessarabia, Wallachia, and Moldavia. He tells strange stories of the tribes who dwelt around Scythia, as far as the uttermost parts of Europe. The Issedonians and the Androphagi were given to cannibalism; the former, like the Callatian Indians, feasting on their fathers, and keeping their skulls set in gold as heirlooms. This custom was, however, balanced with another, which would place them, as some might think now, in the van of progress—they gave women equal rights with men. The Neuri were said to change into wolves periodically; a tradition which still survives in the "wehr-wolf" of the Germans, and the "loup-garou" of the French. Liv-
ingstone relates that there were men in the country above the Zambesi who were supposed to become lions for a term, and that the souls of great captains were thought to pass into the king of beasts. But perhaps the story rose out of the fact that the Neuri wore wolf-skins in winter. There were people in the extreme north who slept six months in the year (Herodotus's informant may have said that there was night for six months), and who had goat's feet—that is, they may

* Heeren.

have worn moccasins. These may have suggested the Satyrs of the Greeks. A common superstition also placed a wonderfully good and happy people behind the region of the north wind, called Hyperboreans. So the "blameless" Ethiopians were supposed to inhabit the extreme South. The Greeks believed in goodness when a very long way from home.

Our author mentions slightly, and with some disdain, the legend (known also to other writers) of one of these Hyperboreans, Abaris, who was said to have been even a greater traveller than himself—who "walked round the world with an arrow, without once eating." But whatever may be thought of the latter part of the story, it seems highly probable that in Abaris's "arrow" we have a dim tradition of the magnetic needle. Its properties were certainly known to the Chinese long before Herodotus's date, and some rumour of the marvel might have reached Europe. The story tempts Herodotus into speculative cosmography. He is dissatisfied with the map of Hecataeus, who divided the habitable world into two equal portions, Europe and Asia, making it like a medal, with the great river of Ocean for a rim; not that he himself at all suspected the world of being a sphere, like some of the later ancients, but that he thought the distribution of the continents manifestly unsound.

If Herodotus had been in the habit of rejecting every tale that he did not believe, like some later writers, we should have lost the valuable passage which seems to prove that Africa was circumnavigated twenty-one centuries before the time of Diaz and Vasco de Gama. Pharaoh Necho, after giving up the Suez canal as hopeless, sent a fleet of Phœnician ships down

the Red Sea, ordering them to return to Egypt by the pillars of Hercules—that is, by the Strait of Gibraltar. As these were their orders, it is to be presumed that the route was already known. They spent three years in accomplishing their task, as they had to sow grain on the way, and wait for the harvest. Herodotus pronounces their voyage apocryphal, because they reported they had the sunrise on their right hand as they sailed round Libya, but which proves indeed that they had doubled the Cape of Good Hope. Sataspes, a Persian, tried to sail round Africa in the other direction, but failed. He had got beyond Cape Soloeis (Spartel) to a country inhabited by a dwarfish people, who dressed in palm-leaves; and there, as he declared, the ship stopped, and would go no further. He had evidently fallen in with the southerly trade-wind, and was not aware that, in order to proceed, he ought to have pushed across towards the South American continent. He met with a fate worse even than that of some later discoverers: he was not only disbelieved, but put to death on his return. Darius appears to have taken a great interest in such discoveries, and it was he who sent Scylax the Carian down the Indus to explore the Indian Ocean.*

Amongst the strange customs which Herodotus records of the Scythians was their manner of keeping the anniversary of the burial of their kings. They slew fifty young men and fifty choice horses, stuffed

* This Scylax, or more probably a later writer who traded on his name, brought home some remarkable travellers' stories. He described an Indian tribe whose feet were so large that they used them as parasols, and another whose ears were so capacious that they slept in them.—See Rawlinson, I. p. 50, note.

the bodies of both, and set them up round the tomb in a circle, the men mounted on the horses, a ghastly body-guard for the royal ghost. Their great deity was the god of war, whom they worshipped under the shape of a scimitar. The Russian or Turkish vapour-bath would appear to have been another of their institutions; but Herodotus seems to confuse it with the process of intoxication by hemp-seed, which was known in early times. They were also distinguished by drunkenness and dislike of foreigners, like some of their supposed descendants, who are not yet cured of these weaknesses.

Against this nation Darius is said by Herodotus to have moved a vast army, bridging over the Thracian Bosphorus and the Danube with boats, and taking with him the Ionian fleet, to the custody of whose commanders he committed the bridge over the river, while he passed on into the northern wildernesses. The Scythians retreated before him towards the Tanais or Don. Then they led him such a long chase that at last his patience was worn out, and he sent to their king to demand that, as a man of honour, he should either stand and fight, or deliver earth and water in token of submission. The Scythian replied that he would soon send him some presents more to the purpose. These arrived in due course of time—a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. Darius at first thought that this signified a tender of homage, but Gobryas, one of the Seven, who had an older head, read the hieroglyphic letter as follows: “Unless you can fly like a bird, or burrow like a mouse, or swim like a frog, you will not escape the Scythian arrows.” Darius took the hint and retreated.

But Scythian horsemen had reached his bridge before him, and tried to prevail on the Ionians to destroy it. Miltiades the Athenian, now tyrant of the Chersonese (of whom we shall hear again), called upon his fellow-Greeks to strike, once for all, a blow for freedom ; to cut the bridge, and leave their Persian masters to perish. But he was overruled in the interest of Darius by Histiaëus of Miletus, and the Persian army returned without irretrievable loss from its military promenade in pursuit of the impalpable Scythians. Megabazus remained behind to reduce the Thracian tribes in the neighbourhood of the Hellespont.

This leads our author to discuss the ethnology of Thrace. It appeared to him that if its numerous tribes had been only united, they would have been a match for any existing nation. His Thrace must nearly have comprehended the present limits of Roumelia, Bulgaria, Servia, Moldavia, and Wallachia. The Getæ or Goths, who were subdued by Darius on his way to Scythia, believed that when they died they went to a good spirit named Zalmoxis, to whom they sent a messenger every five years ; that is, they sacrificed a man by tossing him in the air and catching him on points of lances. Another tribe, when a child was born, sat round him, bewailing the miseries he would have to undergo ; while in a case of death they made a jubilee of the funeral, believing the departed to have attained everlasting happiness. The same belief was connected with a custom in another tribe corresponding to the "Suttee" of the Hindoos. When a man died there was a sharp contention amongst his widows which was the worthiest to be slain over his grave, and the surviving wives considered themselves as in disgrace.

They marked high birth by tattooing, like the South Sea Islanders ; and thought idleness, war, and plunder honourable, but agriculture mean. The nation in general worshipped only the gods of battle, of wine, and of the chase. But the kings paid especial honour to a god corresponding to Hermes or Mercury, or the German Woden. Less was known of the tribes north of the Danube. The Sigynnæ wore a dress like that of the Medes, and possessed a breed of active, hardy, shaggy ponies, the description of which answers to those of the Shetland Islands. Or possibly some vague rumour of the harnessed dogs of Kamskatka may have reached the ears of our author. He does not think that the Thracians could have been correct in saying that a tract of country beyond the Danube was so infested with bees as to be uninhabitable, as bees cannot bear much cold. They may have meant mosquitoes.

Megabazus was now commissioned to transport bodily to Persia the whole tribe of the Pæonians, who lived to the north of Macedonia, of whose industry Darius had conceived an exaggerated notion, by seeing one of their women at Sardis bearing a pitcher on her head, leading a horse, and spinning flax all at the same time. He effected this task with no great difficulty ; but other tribes resisted his arms with success, and especially those who inhabited the Lake Prasias. These must have been a relic of the most ancient population of Europe. Their habits were precisely the same as those of the singular people whose whole manner of life has been brought to light by the discovery of ancient piles in the lakes of Zurich in Switzerland, and who appear to have inhabited nearly all the comparatively shallow lakes that have hitherto been

examined. This pile-city of Prasias is thus described :—

“Platforms supported on tall piles were fixed in the midst of the lake, approached from the land by a single narrow bridge. Originally all the citizens in common drove the piles for the platform, but afterwards every man drove three piles for every wife he married, and they had each several wives. Each man had his own hut on the platform, and his trap-door opening through the scaffolding on the lake below. They tied the little children by the leg to prevent their rolling into the water.” (The proportionate number of children’s bones found in the Swiss lakes would argue that this custom was but negligently observed in those regions.) “They fed their horses and other cattle upon fish, of which there was such an abundance that they had only to let down a basket through the trap-door into the water, and draw it up full.”

What was the ultimate fate of this amphibious colony we do not learn ; but very many of the corresponding settlements in central Europe bear traces of having been destroyed by fire. For the present these lake-people were impregnable, and Megabazus turned his attention to Macedonia, sending first to the court of King Amyntas an embassy of seven noble Persians to demand earth and water. Amyntas entertained them at a feast ; but when their attentions to the ladies of the court began to be offensive, his son Alexander, indignant at the insult, dressed up some Macedonian youths to personate the ladies, whom he had managed to withdraw under promise of their return, and assassinated the Persian envoys when heavy with wine. An expedition was afterwards sent to inquire

after their fate, but Alexander conciliated the commander with hush-money and the hand of his sister in marriage. The royal family of Macedonia were of Argive origin, according to Herodotus ; otherwise, he says, they would not have been allowed to contend at the Olympic games. This Greek descent was used subsequently by Philip of Macedon as a plea for his intervention in the affairs of Greece.

A casual notice of the founding of Cyrene leads Herodotus into Libya, whither we have no space to follow him. He touches on the known North African tribes, and glances at the unknown, relating many marvellous stories ; in fact, his love for anthropology and geography makes him seize any excuse for imparting information. He wellnigh exhausts the world as known to the ancients, and might have wept, as Alexander did that he had no more worlds to conquer, that he had no more to describe. Of one remote and apocryphal region he confesses he knew nothing. He was not sure that the islands called the Cassiterides ("Tin-Islands") had any real existence ; but he had been told that tin came "from the ends of the earth." Such is the sole notice which the great traveller has left of us or our ancestors ; for it is probable that the Cassiterides were the coast of Cornwall.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TYRANTS OF GREECE.

“ If gods will not misfortune send,
List to the counsel of a friend ;
Call on thyself calamity ;
And that, from all thy treasures bright,
In which thy heart takes most delight,
Commit forthwith to deepest sea.”

—SCHILLER, “ Ring of Polycrates.”

THE original constitution of most of the Greek States was a limited monarchy, though the king was emphatically “hedged by divinity,” since the founder of his family was generally supposed to be a god. In time, as the royal prestige wore out, this constitution was generally superseded by an oligarchy, which lasted until some ambitious individual, by courting the unprivileged classes, managed to raise himself to the supremacy.

In the fifth century before Christ there were so many of these usurpers at the same time in Greece, that it has been called the Age of Tyrants. Mr Grote prefers to call them “despots ;” but the name matters little if no sinister meaning is necessarily attached to the word Tyrant. Their number at one time was a fact in support of those who believe in social and

political epidemics. One of the most famous of them was Polycrates of Samos. He was great in arms and arts, and the poet Anacreon was the companion of his revels, just as Goethe enjoyed his Rhenish with Charles Augustus, the jolly Grand-Duke of Weimar. His prosperity was so perfect, that his friend King Amasis of Egypt, as a prudent man, thought it his duty to give him a solemn warning, and advised him to avert the anger of the gods by sacrificing some object which he held very precious. Polycrates chose out of his abundant treasures a favourite emerald ring, which he at once threw into the sea. Five or six days afterwards, a poor fisherman caught so magnificent a fish that it struck him that it was only fit to set before a king. To Polycrates, therefore, he presented it, with many compliments. The tyrant, with his usual geniality, made it a condition that the fisherman would come and help him to eat it. He bashfully accepted the honour. When the fish was served, behold! the emerald ring was there in its inside. The servants were exceedingly glad that the king's lost ring was found—possibly they had been charging each other with stealing it; but Polycrates looked serious, for he felt that the gods had rejected his offering. He thought it right to inform his friend Amasis of the result. Amasis, with less generosity than foresight, at once sent a herald to Samos to renounce the alliance of Polycrates, as he felt sure that the gods had decreed his ruin, and did not wish to be himself involved in it. The tale of the fisherman and the ring has been transferred to Arabian fable.

Fortune still continued to smile on Polycrates, and he overcame all his enemies by force or fraud. Some

Samians, whom he had driven out, managed to set on foot against him an expedition from Lacedæmon. The visit of these people to Sparta is characteristically told. They made a long speech there in the assembly, which they would have hardly done if they had known the Spartan temper better. The authorities made reply that they had forgotten the first half of their discourse, and could not understand the second. The Samians then held up an empty bag, merely remarking, "The bag wants flour." The Spartans said that the word "bag" was quite unnecessary—the gesture was enough. However, they sent a force to Samos to support the exiles; and Polycrates is said to have bribed them to return with leaden money gilt over. The existence of the story is singularly illustrative of the avarice as well as the gullibility of this people.

But the doom of Polycrates could only be deferred. Towards the end of the reign of Cambyses, he was unfortunate enough to excite the cupidity of Orœtes, the Persian satrap of Sardis, who proceeded to set a trap for him. Orœtes said that he feared the covetousness of Cambyses, and offered to deposit all his treasure with Polycrates. The latter sent his secretary to inspect it, who was shown some large chests full of stones, just covered with gold. Satisfied with this report, in spite of all the warnings of his daughter, Polycrates started for the court of Orœtes to fetch the treasure. The satrap at once arrested him, put him to a cruel death, and then impaled his dead body. But the murderer afterwards came to a violent end himself in the reign of Darius.

Another specimen of a tyrant, and this, too, in our common acceptation of the word, was Periander of

Corinth, the son of Cypselus. By his origin he was partly patrician and partly plebeian. At one time the government of Corinth was in the hands of a single family called the Bacchiadæ, who only intermarried with one another. But one of them happened to have a daughter called, from her lameness, Labda (from the Greek letter Λ (L), which originally had one leg shorter than the other), whom her parents were, on this account, obliged to marry out of the family to one Aëtion, a man of the people. In consequence of oracles which boded ill to Corinth from a son of Aëtion, the rulers sent ten of their number to despatch the infant as soon as he was born. When they came and asked to see the child, Labda showed it them, thinking their visit was only complimentary. They had agreed that whoever took the child first in his arms should dash it on the ground. Providentially, however, the babe smiled in the man's face who had taken him, so that he had no heart to kill it, but passed it on to his neighbour, and he to another, and so it went through all the ten. When the mother had carried the child indoors again, she overheard the party outside loudly reproaching one another with their faint-heartedness in not making away with it. Fearing from this that they would return, she hid the child away in a chest or corn-bin, so that when they re-entered they could not find him. From this escape he was called Cypselus or 'Bin.' When he grew up he made himself despot of Corinth, and ruled harshly, visiting the citizens with confiscations, banishment, and death. He reigned thirty years, and then his son Periander succeeded him, who, at first, was a mild ruler, until he sent to Thrasylulus, despot of Miletus, to ask him

the best way of governing his people. Thrasybulus took the Corinthian herald forth into the fields, and as he passed through the corn, still questioning him about Corinthian affairs, he snapped off and threw away all the ears that overtopped the rest. He walked through the whole field doing this, till the damage was considerable. After this he dismissed his visitor without a word of advice. When the messenger returned to Periander, he said that he had been sent on a fool's errand to a madman, who gave him no answer, but only walked through a field spoiling his wheat by plucking off all the longest ears.* Periander said nothing; but he understood the meaning of Thrasybulus, which was, that he was to govern by cutting off all the foremost citizens. After this he became a much worse tyrant than his father, and finished the work which he had begun. On one occasion he stripped all the women of Corinth of their clothes. Having sent to consult an oracle of the dead† about some lost property, the shade of his wife Melissa (whom he had put to death) appeared to him, and said that she was cold, and had literally nothing to put on; for the robes buried with her were of no use, since they had not been burnt. So he made proclamation that all the matrons should go to the temple of Juno in full dress, and there having surrounded them

* The English reader will remember the words of the gardener in Shakespeare:—

“Go thou, and like an executioner,
Cut off the heads of too fast-growing sprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth.”

—‘Richard II.,’ Act. iii. sc. 4.

† Hence the word “necromancy.” The parallel of Saul, the witch of Endor, and the ghost of Samuel, is at once suggested.

with his guards, took all their clothes from them, and burnt them as an offering to his dead queen.

The relations of Periander with his younger son Lycophron form one of the most touching episodes in Herodotus. The lad had learnt the fact of his mother's murder, and from that time would neither speak to his father nor answer him. The father at last banished him from his house. He even sent warning to the friends with whom his son took refuge, that all who harboured him did so at their peril—nay, that any who even spoke to him should pay a fine to Apollo. The lad wandered miserably from one to the other, and at last was found lying in the public porticoes. Then Periander himself went to him, and upbraided him with his folly in depriving himself by his obstinacy of a princely home. Lycophron only answered by reminding his father that he had now himself incurred the forfeit to the god. Periander saw that the case was hopeless, and sent him to Corcyra for safe keeping. But when he found himself growing old, and unequal to the cares of government, and saw that his elder son was quite incompetent, he sent to offer to resign in Lycophron's favour. No reply came. Then the father sent his favourite sister to treat with him, and try to soften his heart. Lycophron's answer was that he would never set foot again in Samos while his father lived. Periander humbled himself so far as to offer to retire himself to Corcyra, and allow the son to take his place. To this Lycophron agreed; on hearing which the people of Corcyra murdered him, in dread of receiving as their master the terrible Periander.

A pleasanter story in connection with him will be best told, as nearly as may be, in the old historian's

own words, with a little retrenchment of his diffuseness.

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN.

In Periander's days there lived a minstrel of Lesbos, Arion by name, who was second to none as a player on the lute. This Arion, who spent most of his time with Periander, sailed to Italy and Sicily, and having earned by his minstrelsy great store of treasure, hired a Corinthian ship to go back to Corinth—for whom should he trust rather than the Corinthians, whom he knew so well. When the crew were out at sea, they took counsel together to throw Arion overboard, and keep his treasure. But he divined their intent, and besought them to take his money, but spare his life. But the shipmen refused, and bade him either straightway kill himself on board, so that he might be buried on shore, or leap into the sea of his own freewill. Then Arion, being in a sore strait, begged, since it must be so, that he might don his vestments, and sing one strain standing on the quarterdeck; and when he had ended his song he promised to despatch himself. [He asked to put on his sacred garb, knowing that thereby he should gain the protection of Apollo.] The seamen consented, as well pleased once more to hear the master of all singers, and made space to hear him, withdrawing into the midship; and he chanted a lively air, and then plunged overboard, all as he was. So they sailed away to Corinth, and thought no more of Arion. But, lo! a dolphin took the minstrel up on his back, and landed him safely at the promontory of Tænarus in Laconia, whence he made his way to Corinth, all in his sacred robes, and told there all that had befallen him. But

Periander did not believe him, and kept him under guard. At last the shipmen came, and when Periander asked them what had become of Arion, they said they had left him safe and sound at Tarentum, in Italy. Then Periander produced Arion in his vestments, just as he was when he leapt overboard, and they were struck dumb, and could deny their guilt no more. And Arion set up, as a thank-offering to the god, an effigy of a man riding on a dolphin.

Such is the legend given by Herodotus. Another version makes Apollo appear to Arion in a dream, assuring him of succour before he leapt overboard, and adds that, after landing, the bard neglected to put back again into the sea his preserver, who consequently perished, and was buried by the king of the country. When the sailors came, they were made to swear to the truth of their story on the dolphin's tomb, where Arion had been previously hid. When he suddenly appeared, they confessed their guilt, and were punished by crucifixion, for the double crime of robbery with intent to murder, and perjury. Arion and his bearer afterwards became a constellation, by the will of Apollo, according to a later addition to the legend.

It is not impossible that the legend of Arion grew out of the group of the man on the dolphin, which may have been set up to commemorate the expedition which sailed from Laconia to found Tarentum, comprised of Dorian and Achæan Greeks; the dolphin, sacred to Neptune, symbolising the Achæan element, and the minstrel, loved of Apollo, the Dorian. The legend of Colston, the munificent Bristol merchant, whose anniver-

sary is still celebrated at Bristol, is well known in the west of England. A ship in which he sailed was said to have sprung a leak, which was miraculously plugged by a self-sacrificing dolphin, and so the ship came home safe. Some rationalists have volunteered the prosaic explanation that Colston was saved and brought home in another vessel called the Dolphin. One of the charitable societies formed in his honour bears the name of the "Dolphin." The sacred character of this fish (or rather cetacean) is doubtless of remote antiquity. He is the subject of a little poem (exquisite in the original) by Philip of Thessalonica.

THE DOLPHIN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

"Blaming Boreas, o'er the sea I was flying slowly,
 For the wind of Thrace to me is a thing unholy,
 When his back a dolphin showed, bending with devotion,
 And the child of æther rode on the child of ocean.
 I am that sweet-chanting bird whom the night doth smile
 at ;
 And like one that kept his word proved my dolphin pilot
 As he glided onward still with his oarless rowing,
 With the lute within my bill I did cheer his going.
 Dolphins never ply for hire, but for love and glory,
 When the sons of song require ; trust Arion's story."

There is also a beautiful version of the legend by the Roman poet Ovid.

Cleisthenes of Sicyon was another eminent tyrant, and a magnificent man in every way. He had one beautiful daughter named Agariste, through whom despotism was fated to receive its death-blow in Athens. Like the Orsinis and Colonnas of medieval Rome,

whose feuds gave Rienzi his opportunity to establish democracy, the patrician families of the Isagorids and Alcæonids strove for supremacy at Athens, and their strife gave birth to freedom. Herodotus gives a quaint account of the foundation of the great wealth of the latter family.

Alcæon, the son of Megacles, had assisted Cræsus in his negotiations with the Delphic oracle, and was invited in consequence to the court of Sardis. When he had arrived, Cræsus gave him leave to go into the treasury and take as much gold as he could carry away on his person at one time. So he put on the largest tunic he could find, so as to make a capacious fold, and the roomiest buskins. First he stowed his boots with gold dust, then he packed his clothes with it, then he powdered his hair with it, and lastly he took a mouthful of it, and so came out of the treasury "dragging his legs with difficulty, and looking like anything rather than a human being, as his mouth was choked up, and everything about him was in a plethoric state." When Cræsus saw him he was highly amused, and gave him what he had taken and as much again. When Alcæon came home to Athens he found himself rich enough to enter as a competitor at the great Olympic games, and win the blue ribbon of that national festival—the four-horse chariot-race, which made the winner a hero in the eyes of his countrymen for ever.

Two generations afterwards this family made a splendid marriage. Cleisthenes of Sicyon had added this to his renown, that he too had been a victor at Olympia. Under these circumstances he was not inclined to throw away a beauty and heiress like his

daughter Agariste on the first comer, but, like the father in Goldoni's "*Matrimonio per concorso*," he proclaimed that she should be wooed and won by public competition. He invited all the most eligible youths in Greece to come and spend a year at his court, promising to give his decision when it had elapsed; and he prepared an arena expressly for the purpose of testing their athletic proficiency. Among the suitors was the exquisite Smyndyrides of Sybaris, the most luxurious man of the most luxurious Hellenic city. It was he who was said to have complained of the crumpled rose-leaf on his couch, and to have fainted when he once saw a man hard at work in the fields. He would certainly have broken down in the athletic ordeal. Not so Males, the brother of Titormus, a kind of human gorilla of enormous strength who lived in the wilds of *Ætolia*; but he would scarcely have been polished enough as a son-in-law for Cleisthenes. And the father might be loath to intrust his daughter to the son of Pheidon, the despot of Argos, a man notorious for rapacity and violence. The two Athenian candidates, Megacles son of Alcmaeon,* and Hippocleides, a member of the great rival family, were probably the favourites from the first; for it is hard to imagine that there was no betting on an occasion so tempting to the sporting characters of antiquity. Cleisthenes having first ascertained that his guests could give satisfactory references, made proof of their manhood, their tempers, their accomplishments, and their tastes,—sometimes bringing them altogether, sometimes holding private

* The son in this family took the grandfather's name: Megacles, Alcmaeon, Megacles, Alcmaeon, and so on. This was Alcmaeon II.

conversations with each. Although gymnastics were very important, he seemed to have laid most stress on their qualities as diners-out. The man who at the end of the year seemed, in the opinion of all, to have the best chance, was Hippocleides, who indeed was connected with the royal Cypselids of Corinth, as well as an Athenian of the highest fashion. When the great day arrived for the suitors to know their fate, Cleisthenes sacrificed a hundred oxen, and gave a public feast, to which he invited not only the foreign suitors, but all his own people. After the feast there was one more trial in music and in rhetoric,—probably to see how the suitors could carry their wine. As the cup went round, Hippocleides, abashing the rest of the party by his assurance, called to the flute-player to strike up a dance. Then he danced, in a manner which gave perfect satisfaction to himself, though Cleisthenes began to look grave. Next he ordered a table to be brought in, mounted on it, and rehearsed certain Lacedæmonian and Attic figures. To crown all, he stood on his head and kicked his legs in the air. This last performance, which Hippocleides might perhaps have learnt in his youth from the street-boys of the Piræus, was too much for Cleisthenes, who had long contained himself with difficulty. “Son of Tisander, thou hast danced away thy marriage,” he exclaimed, in fierce disgust. The other quietly answered, “Hippocleides does not care!” from which “Hippocleides don’t care” became a proverbial expression. Then, as Herodotus tells us, Cleisthenes rose and spoke to this effect:—

“Gentlemen, suitors of my daughter,—I am well pleased with you all—so well pleased that, if it were possible, I would make you all my sons-in-law. But as I

have but one daughter, that is unfortunately impossible. You have all done me much honour in desiring the alliance of my house. In consideration of this, and of the inconvenience to which you have been put in wasting your valuable time at my court, I beg to present you with a talent of silver each. But to Megacles, the son of Alcmaeon, I betroth my daughter Agariste to be his wife according to the usage of Athens."

The issue of this marriage was Cleisthenes, the great Athenian reformer, who was named after his maternal grandfather.

Pisistratus, the despot of Athens, has been already mentioned as contemporary with Cræsus. He won immortality by digesting the poems of Homer into a consecutive whole,—settling, as it were, the canon of the Greek Scriptures. His rule was just and mild, until his enemies forced greater severity upon him in his latter days. He was succeeded by his son Hippias. An abortive attempt to assassinate this prince was made by two men bound together by the tie of romantic friendship peculiar to the Greeks, Harmodius and Aristogeiton. This pair have always been celebrated as model patriots by the admirers of tyrannicide; but **they** bungled in their business by slaying the wrong brother, Hipparchus instead of Hippias, and only provoked Hippias to sterner measures of repression. At last the Alcmaeonids, growing weary of exile, made such strong interest with the god of Delphi that his oracle continually urged the Spartans to expel the Pisistratids. The clan, after a long struggle, were compelled to quit Athens, and retired to Sigeium, on the Hellespont, having selected this asylum as most convenient for intriguing with the Court of Persia for their restoration. They had ruled in

Athens from B.C. 560 to B.C. 510, which was about the date of the expulsion of the kings from Rome. They traced their origin to Codrus and Melanthus, semi-mythical kings of Attica, and remotely to the Homeric Nestor of Pylos, after whose son Pisistratus the great ruler of Athens was named.

A festival song in honour of the famous tyrannicides was long the "Marseillaise" of republican Athens:—

THE SWORD AND THE MYRTLE.

I'll wreath with myrtle-bough my sword,
Like those who struck down Athens' lord,
Our laws engrafting equal right on—
Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

Harmodius dear, thou art not dead,
But in the happy isles, they say,
Where fleet Achilles lives for aye,
And good Tydeides Diomed.

I'll wreath my sword with myrtle-bough,
Like those who laid Hipparchus low,
When on Athenè's holiday
The tyrant wight they dared to slay.

Because they slew him, and because
They gave to Athens equal laws,
Eternal fame shall shed a light on
Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

CHAPTER VIII.

IONIA.

“O for a tongue to curse the slave,
Whose treason, like a deadly blight,
Comes o’er the counsels of the brave,
And blasts them in their hour of night !”
—MOORE, “Fire-Worshippers.”

DARIUS had not forgotten the good service done him by Histiaeus of Miletus, in preserving the Danube bridge for him on his hurried retreat from the Scythian expedition. He had given him a grant of land in Thrace, in a most desirable position for a new settlement. But he was afterwards persuaded that he had done wrong. A shrewd Greek would be tempted to form there the nucleus of an independent power. He therefore sent for Histiaeus, and detained him in an honourable captivity in his own court at Susa. And this detention led to the great Persian war.

There was a revolution in the little island of Naxos. “The men of substance,” as they were literally called, were expelled, and came to Miletus begging Aristagoras, now deputy-governor in the absence of his father-in-law Histiaeus, to restore them. Thinking to get Naxos for himself, Aristagoras procured the aid of

a Persian flotilla. On the way, a quarrel arose about a Greek captain whom Megabates, the Persian admiral, had punished, because he found no watch set on board his ship. The punishment consisted in binding him down so that his head protruded from one of the ports or rowlocks, and Aristagoras had taken upon himself to release him. Megabates, in dudgeon, sent to warn the Naxians, who were to have been surprised, and the expedition failed. Then Aristagoras, finding himself unable to pay the expenses of the armament, as had been stipulated, thought of securing his position by the desperate expedient of stirring up a revolt at Miletus against Persia. He was confirmed in this resolution by the arrival of a singular courier from Histiaëus, who was determined at any cost to escape from the forced hospitalities of Susa. Histiaëus had taken a slave, shaved his head, punctured certain letters on the bare crown, then kept him till the hair was grown, and sent him to Aristagoras with merely the verbal message that he was to shave his head. When Aristagoras had played the barber, he found that the living despatch bore the word "revolt."

His first step was to proclaim democracy throughout the Greek confederacy. The different despots were given up to their fellow-citizens, to be dealt with according to their deserts. It speaks strongly in favour of the character of their "tyranny," that nearly all were dismissed uninjured. One only—Coes of Mytilene—was stoned to death. Aristagoras then set sail for Sparta to seek for aid. That state at this time enjoyed the singular constitution of a double monarchy. This may have had some mythological connection with the legend of the twin sons of Leda, Castor and

Pollux, who became sea-gods, from whom the constellation of the Gemini was named; but Herodotus assigns to it a different origin.

His tradition is that when the sons of Hercules reconquered their heritage of the Peloponnese, one of their three chiefs, Aristodemus, had the kingdom of Sparta for his share. His wife gave birth to twins just before his death. The boys were much alike; and the mother, hoping that they might both be kings, protested that she did not know them apart. The Spartans were puzzled; and the Delphic oracle gave an answer which hardly mended the matter, except so far that it satisfied the mother.

“Let both be kings, but let the elder have more honour.”

But which was the elder? that was the question. At last it was suggested that a watch should be set to see which the mother washed and fed first. If she acted on system, the case was clear. The espionage succeeded; the elder was discovered, and named Eurysthenes, and the other Procles. The two brothers, when they grew up, were said to have been always at variance, and their separate lines continued so ever after. The two kings had peculiar duties, rights, and privileges, but lived in the same plain way as other citizens.

When Aristagoras arrived at Sparta, he was admitted to an audience with the senior king, Cleomenes. He showed him a bronze tablet engraved with a chart—the earliest known map of the world—pointed out where all the different nations lay, and conjured him to assist his kinsmen the Ionians; observing, that it was foolish

for the Spartans to fritter away their force in local feuds, when they might be lords of Asia. As for the Persians, they were an easy prey—men who actually “went into battle with trousers on.” Cleomenes promised to give him an answer in three days. At the second interview he asked “how far it was to Susa?” Aristagoras was unguarded enough to say, “a three months’ journey;” on which Cleomenes ordered him to quit Sparta before sunset. Then he returned and sat before the king in the sacred guise of a suppliant, with an olive-bough in his hand. A little daughter of Cleomenes, named Gorgo, aged eight or nine, was standing at her father’s side. The Milesian wished her to be sent away, but Cleomenes told him to say on, and not to heed the child. Then Aristagoras began by offering ten talents, and as the king shook his head, increased them by degrees to fifty. When this sum was mentioned, the child cried out, “Go away, father, or the strange man will be sure to bribe thee.”* The “conscience of the king” was moved. He withdrew to escape the temptation, and the mission of Aristagoras failed at Sparta.

At Athens he had better chances of success. Athens was in the heyday of her first freedom. She had rid herself of her Tyrants, the Pisistratids, who were at

* Gorgo was well worthy to become, as she afterwards did, the wife of Leonidas. An incident in her married life, subsequently related by Herodotus, seems to militate against the dictum of Aristotle that the Spartan women were inferior to the men. All the authorities of Sparta were puzzled by the arrival of a waxen tablet (the usual form of a despatch) with nothing written on it. When Gorgo heard of it, she at once suggested that the wax should be scraped off, and the despatch was found engraven on the wood.

this moment intriguing with Persia, not without success, for their restoration. The feelings of the citizens towards these powerful absentees and their Asiatic friends were much the same as those of the French of 1792 towards the Emigration and its abettors. The two great ruling families were now the rival houses of Alcmaeon and Isagoras. Cleisthenes the Alcmaeonid, grandson of the tyrant of Sicyon, might not have thought it worth his while to court the people, had he not been determined to put down the rival faction which was led by Isagoras, brother of his father's rival Hippocleides, of dancing notoriety. As it was, he brought about a complete democratic revolution. He broke up the four old tribes, which were bound by family ties and sacred rites, and made ten new geographical divisions. This was as radical a change as the substitution of departments for provinces in France; and the introduction of the decimal system, in nearly every department of state at Athens, anticipated by more than two thousand years the work of the French Revolution. The Isagorids for a time turned the tables on the Alcmaeonids, by calling in the assistance of the Spartans, and Cleisthenes had only just defeated a dangerous confederacy against Athens. The Spartans had invaded Attica from Megara, when the Bœotians and Chalcidians broke in upon their northern frontier. But the usual jealousy between the two Spartan kings, and the defection of their Corinthian allies, dissolved the Spartan army, and left the Athenians at leisure to deal with their other enemies. They defeated the Bœotians with great slaughter, taking seven hundred prisoners; and crossing on the same day to Eubœa, there obtained a second victory over the Chalcidians, in

whose lands they afterwards planted a military colony. The prisoners were ransomed, but their chains still hung in the citadel of Athens in the time of Herodotus on the walls blackened with Persian fire, and a handsome bronze quadriga stood by the gateway, which had been offered to Minerva from the tithe of the ransom. Its inscription was to this effect:—

“Armies of nations twain, Bœotia banded with Chalcis,
Sons of Athenian sires quelled in the labour of war,
Slaking their ardent pride in a dismal fetter of iron—
Then to the Maid for tithe gave we the chariot-and-four.”

The energy of Athens at this time struck Herodotus forcibly. It was like that of the French Jacobins when they had enemies on every frontier, and the Vendée and the Federals of the South on their hands besides. Great political changes give a nation a present sense of life and happiness, which is too often ultimately wrecked by selfishness, but which seems for a time to inspire superhuman strength. The worsted Thebans stirred up the little island of Ægina, which was always a thorn in the side of Athens till she had become mistress of the sea. There was a very old-standing feud about some sacred images or fetishes of olive-wood, representing the goddess Ceres and her daughter Persephone. No doubt their holiness was enhanced by their age and ugliness. Artistic beauty seems to have little to do with the sacredness of images, and in modern times in Italy an old black Madonna has been an object of peculiar veneration. The Zeus of Phidias and the Aphrodite of Praxiteles were not moulded by the hands of Faith.

The Athenians had just refused a demand of the

Persian satrap of Sardis for the restoration of their tyrant Hippias, when Aristagoras arrived. They received him with open arms, not only on account of this, but also because Miletus was their own colony; and despatched twenty ships—probably all they could spare from the Æginetan war—to aid the Milesians in their struggle against the yoke of Persia. These were joined by five galleys from Eretria in Eubœa, that city being under an obligation to the Milesians. The crews left their ships on the shore near Ephesus, and marched on and surprised Sardis, shutting up the Persians in the citadel. But Sardis proved to them a miniature Moscow. The town, mainly built of wood and reeds, caught fire, and the buccaneers thought it best to retreat as soon as a sack became out of the question. But the Persian forces caught them up near Ephesus, and inflicted severe punishment before they could reach their ships. The Ionian Greeks were now left to themselves by the Athenians, but the insurrection assumed large proportions, involving the whole Greek seaboard of Asia, many inland tribes, and lastly spreading to the island of Cyprus.

When Darius heard of the great revolt, and especially of the burning of Sardis, his wrath was greatly kindled against the Athenians. He took a bow and shot towards heaven, saying, “O Zeus! grant that I may be avenged on the Athenians!” He also appointed a slave to say to him thrice every day during dinner, “O king! remember the Athenians.”* Then he sent

* There is a parallel symbolism in the case of Elisha and Joash (2 Kings xiii. 17): “Then Elisha said, Shoot; and he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord’s deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria.”

for Histiaëus, telling him that he suspected he knew something about the business. But the Greek's innocent look and plausible words deceived the king, who was induced to send him to the coast—the very thing he had desired—to help to quell the insurrection. At Sardis Histiaëus found an astuter head to deal with. The satrap there was Artaphernes the king's brother. He said, "I see how it is, Histiaëus—thou hast stitched the shoe, and Aristagoras has put it on." But the adroit Ionian managed for the time to escape out of all his difficulties. He even outwitted Artaphernes so far, that, as Mr Grote supposes, he got him to execute a number of innocent Persians at Sardis, by opening a treasonable correspondence with them. The Milesians, however, would not receive him back as governor: he therefore persuaded the Lesbians to give him eight triremes, with which he took to piracy on his own account in the parts about the Hellespont. While marauding on the coast near Lesbos, he was defeated by a Persian force which happened to be there, and his captors, fearing lest the good-natured Darius might pardon him, put him to death at Sardis. Their fears were well founded; for when they sent his head to the king, Darius expressed much regret, and ordered it to be buried with all honour. This is quite consistent with the character of the Persian king as drawn by the prophet Daniel. It seems as if no one who had once done him a service could ever afterwards forfeit his good graces.

After reducing Cyprus, the Persians fell with their combined force on the Ionians and their allies. A victory won by the Greek fleet over the Phœnician sailors of Darius had no result of importance. The Carians

fought most valiantly, and cut off a whole Persian division by an ambuscade. Though they lost in one battle ten thousand men, yet their spirit was unbroken. Miletus, too, still held out gallantly. If any man under these circumstances ought to have shown an example of self-devotion, that man was Aristagoras. But nerve is inconsistent with levity of character. It often happens that the coward runs into the jaws of his fate, and so it happened to him. He abandoned the Ionian cause, and with some of his partisans sailed away for his father-in-law's new settlement in Thrace, where he was killed while besieging some petty town. He had been just in time to make his fruitless escape, for the Persians now proceeded to invest Miletus by land and sea. The allied Greeks decided on leaving it to defend itself by land, and concentrating their fleet at a small island off the coast. The allies counted in all three hundred and fifty triremes, which were confronted by six hundred in the service of Persia. The Persian commanders first tried to dissolve the hostile confederation by sending the deposed despots each to their own countrymen with promises of pardon on submission, and threats of extermination in case of prolonged resistance. The plan so far failed that it did not supersede the necessity of an action, for each separate state imagined itself the only one to which overtures were made. The Ionian captains, in their council of war, now agreed to put themselves all under the command of Dionysius of Phocæa. He set to work to put the ships in constant training, especially practising a manœuvre something like that of Nelson, — attacking the enemy's line in columns, and cutting through it. The invention of steam-rams seems likely to make the sea-fights

of the future more like those of the remote past than ever. The incidents of the *Merrimac's* battle and of *Iissa* recall the collisions of ancient navies, only that the oars of the galleys are superseded by steam-engines. Their sails were not used in action, as they would have only embarrassed the rowers. To sweep away a whole broadside of oars by cleverly shaving the enemy, and then turn sharply and ram him home on the quarter, was doubtless a favourite evolution of the best sailors. Dionysius was too much of a martinet for the self-indulgent Ionians. He kept them at sea all night—an unheard-of innovation—and at drill all day, and the days were terribly hot. They had not bargained for this when they chose him admiral. They began to murmur. “What god have we offended that we should be thus victimised? What fools we were to give ourselves up body and soul to this Phocæan bully, who commands but three ships of his own! We shall fall sick with the work and heat. The Persians can but make us slaves, and no slavery can well be worse than this. Let us mutiny.” So they landed and encamped on the island, lolled in the shade all day, and refused to go on board any more. Then the Persian poison began to work. *Æaces*, the son of *Syloson*, lately tyrant of *Samos*, succeeded in persuading his countrymen to promise to desert, and they alone had sixty ships. Little could be hoped now from a general battle, but the battle took place. The Samians went off, all but eleven ships, whose stanch captains, like *Nelson* at *Copenhagen* with his blind eye to the telescope, would not see the signal of retreat. Most of the other allied squadrons, when they saw what the Samians were doing, imitated their bad example. The Chian

contingent, with the Samian eleven and a few others, maintained a desperate struggle. The hundred Chian ships, each with forty picked marines on board, charged repeatedly through the enemy's line. When they had taken many of his galleys, and lost half their own, such as were able made their way to their own island. Their damaged ships made for Mycalè, where the crews ran them ashore and marched to Ephesus. But ill fortune followed them. It was night, and the Ephesians were celebrating a feast, whose chief ceremony was a torch-light procession of women. Thinking them a party of freebooters come to carry off their wives and daughters, the citizens sallied out and cut them all to pieces. Dionysius the Phocæan had taken three ships, thus exactly doubling his own number. When he saw that the fight was lost, he made straight for the coast of Phœnicia, left undefended by the absence of their war-galleys, sank a number of merchantmen in the harbours, and gained by this booty the means of setting up handsomely as a corsair in Sicily, where he plundered Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians, but—with “a refinement of delicacy very unusual,” as Mr Rawlinson observes—let all Greek vessels go free.

The fall of Miletus soon followed the sea-fight. Most of the men were killed, and the women and children enslaved. The Athenians were deeply affected by the news, and when their poet Phrynichus brought on the stage his tragedy of the “Capture of Miletus,” the audience burst into tears, and he was fined a thousand drachmas (francs), and forbidden ever to exhibit it again. The revolt, which had now been desperately maintained for six years, was terribly expiated. The towns on the coast were as far as possible depopulated

(the people being sent to the interior); and the islands were traversed by lines of soldiers, who "netted" the inhabitants from one side to the other. Cities and temples were burnt to the ground. The Chians had been warned of coming evil by terrible portents. Of a hundred youths sent to Delphi, all but two had died of a pestilence; and just before the great sea-fight off Miletus, the roof of a public school had fallen on the heads of the children of the principal citizens, and only one had escaped out of a hundred and twenty. In 1821 Europe was roused to sympathy for Greece by the horrors which this very island (Scio) suffered from the troops of the Capudan Pasha.

After a time the policy of the Persians changed towards Ionia, probably because Darius disapproved of the excessive severity which had been exercised; and Mar-donius, his son-in-law, a young noble of great promise, was sent to depose once more the "tyrants," and establish democracies. These rulers had proved that they were not to be trusted. Having settled this business to the king's satisfaction, he was appointed to the command of a fleet and army whose destination was Athens and Eretria—for Darius had never forgotten their offence in the burning of Sardis. But the ulterior object of the expedition was the subjugation of all Greece.

As the Persian fleet was doubling Mount Athos, a north wind sprang up which terribly shattered it. Little short of three hundred wrecks and twenty thousand corpses were cast away on the rocky promontory. Many fell victims, says Herodotus, to sea-monsters—one of the additional perils of the deep in the imagination of ancient mariners; those who could

not swim were drowned—and those who could, died of cold. Mardonius himself received a wound in an action on the mainland of Thrace, and the expedition returned home with its commander invalided. Darius immediately made fresh preparations, and sent heralds to all the Greek states to demand earth and water, in order that he might know what support to expect. It is to be hoped that the Athenians and Spartans did not disgrace themselves by throwing one of the heralds into a well and the other into a pit, and telling them to fetch earth and water thence; but such is the story. Darius himself would under no provocation have so forgotten his knighthood. Some years afterwards, the Spartans were said to have sent two of their citizens, who voluntarily offered themselves, to Susa, as an atonement for this outrage, for which they believed that the wrath of the hero Talthybius, the patron of heralds, lay heavy on them; but Xerxes, who was then king, would not accept the sacrifice, and dismissed them unhurt.

The Æginetans gave the earth and water to Darius, probably to spite the Athenians, who at once denounced them to the Spartans (who were as yet considered the leaders of Greece) as traitors to the national cause. The Spartan king Cleomenes went to Ægina to arrest the most guilty parties; but his mission there was foiled by his brother-king Demaratus, who was accusing him at home. In retaliation, Cleomenes attempted to prove that Demaratus was illegitimate. His mother was the loveliest woman in Sparta. She had been ugly in her childhood, but was changed into a beauty by her nurse taking her daily to the temple of Helen.

There a mysterious lady—"tall as the gods, and most divinely fair"—one day laid her hand on the child, whose looks from that time forth began to amend. In due time she had been married to a noble Spartan; but Ariston the king fell in love with her, and got her from her husband, who was his greatest friend, by a ruse. He proposed to exchange their most precious possessions, and they ratified the compact by an oath. Ariston straightway demanded his friend's wife. Thus taken off his guard, and bound by his oath, the husband unwillingly resigned her. But from circumstances connected with the birth of the child Demaratus, he was supposed by some to be not the son of Ariston, but of her former husband. Cleomenes found a powerful ally in Leotychides, the next heir, who was a deadly enemy of Demaratus, and the suit was carried on in his name. The inevitable oracle of Delphi was the last court of appeal; and the priestess, being bribed by Cleomenes, pronounced against Demaratus, who was then deposed, and ultimately driven from Sparta by the taunts of Leotychides. He made his way to that paradise of refugees, the hospitable court of Darius, who gave him lands and cities. He had stood very high in the estimation of his countrymen, as having been the only Spartan who had won the four-horse chariot-race at Olympia.

When Cleomenes had thus worked his will on Demaratus, he took Leotychides, his new associate on the throne, with him to Ægina, where he arrested two of the principal citizens, as guilty of treason against the liberty of Greece, and deposited them as hostages with their bitter enemies the Athenians. But his own end was near. Rumour accused him of underhand practices

against Demaratus, and he fled into Arcadia, where he began to hatch a conspiracy against Sparta. The Spartans in alarm called him home to his former honours. He had always been eccentric; he now became a maniac. He would dash his staff in the face of every citizen he met. At last his friends put him in the stocks--a wholesome instrument of restraint, as common there as in our own country within the last century. Finding himself alone one day with his keeper, he asked for a knife. The Helot did not dare to refuse the king, though a prisoner. Then he committed suicide in a manner which, though effected more clumsily, resembled the "Happy Despatch" of the Japanese.

The madness of Cleomenes, like that of Cambyses, was generally supposed to have been a judgment on his impiety. Herodotus thought his treatment of Demaratus enough to account for it; but other charges equally grave were brought against him. He had bribed the Pythian priestess. He had roasted alive some fifty Argives who had taken refuge in a sacred grove, during his invasion of Argolis, by burning the grove itself. He had scourged Argive priests for not allowing him, a foreigner, to sacrifice in the temple of Juno. He had been in the habit of entering forbidden temples, and generally of making a parade of reckless irreligion. The Spartans themselves, however, gave a more naturalistic account of the cause of his madness. Certain Scythian ambassadors, who were staying at Sparta to negotiate a league against Darius, had induced the king to adopt the habit of taking his wine without water like themselves. "To drink like a Scythian" was a proverb. The case of Cambyses, as we have seen, admitted of the like explanation.

When Cleomenes was dead, the Æginetans sent to Sparta to complain of Leotychides about their hostages, who were still in custody with the Athenians. Leotychides, who was not popular, narrowly escaped being given up as a hostage in their stead ; but, in the end, he was duly sent to Athens to demand their release. The Athenians refused to give them up, saying that as two kings had placed them there, they could not give them up to one. They certainly would have had the English law of trusteeship on their side. Leotychides, however, read them a striking lesson on the sacredness of trusts. He told them how one Glaucus, a Spartan, had once consulted the oracle at Delphi as to restoring a deposit of money to its rightful owner. He had the audacity to ask whether he might venture to purge himself by an oath, according to the Greek law, and so keep the money. The Pythoness gave answer in these warning words :—

“ O Glaucus, gold is good to win,
And a false oath is easy sin ;
Swear—an thou wilt : death follows both
The righteous and unrighteous oath :
But Perjury breeds an awful Birth,
That hath no name in heaven or earth ;
Strong without hands, swift without feet,
It tracks the pathway of deceit—
Sweeps its whole household from the land ;
Only the just man’s house shall stand.”

When Glaucus heard these words, he at once restored the money, and sent to beg of the god that the thought of his heart might be forgiven him. The oracle replied that to tempt heaven with such a question was as bad as to commit the sin. “ And now,” said the

Spartan king, "mark my words, men of Athens; at this day there is none of Glaucus' race left in Sparta. they have perished, root and branch."

The Athenians, however, turned a deaf ear to the solemn monition. In return for their stubbornness, the Æginetans laid wait for and captured the Sacred Galley which carried the Athenian embassy to Delos periodically, and threw the envoys (men of the highest rank) into prison. A fierce war of reprisals was entered upon, of which perhaps the most remarkable characteristic is the poverty of the Athenians of the period in ships. They were obliged to beg twenty galleys of their friends the Corinthians, who, as it was against the law to give them, generously sold the whole for a hundred drachmæ—about five francs apiece.

Leotychides might have served to point the moral of his own remarkable anecdote. He reaped little happiness from the successful plot by which he had supplanted Demaratus. After seeing his only son die before him, he ended his own days in exile, having been banished from Sparta for the disgraceful crime of taking bribes from the enemy during a war with the Thessalians. The evident satisfaction with which Herodotus, here as elsewhere, traces the course of retributive justice, is highly characteristic of the historian.

CHAPTER IX.

MARATHON.

“ The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow !
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear !
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below !
Such was the scene.”

—BYRON, “ Childe Harold.”

As the first expedition against Greece under Mardonius had ended in disaster, Darius thought it best to let the young commander gain experience before he was intrusted with the conduct of another ; possibly, also, his wound was long in healing. The second armada was put under the command of Datis, a Mede of mature years, and Artaphernes, nephew of the king. They had express orders to bring the Athenians and Eretrians into the royal presence in chains. The whole flotilla — six hundred war-ships, besides transports—struck straight across sea, through the Archipelago, not caring again to tempt the dangers of Athos. After sacking Naxos, they came to the sacred island of Delos, the birthplace of the twin deities Apollo and Diana. Fortunately for the inhabitants, the senior commander was a Median ritualist, not an iconoclast like Cambyses, and the sacred island was more than spared.

Herodotus mentions an earthquake as occurring soon after this visit, and Thucydides another ; and the story of the island having once floated about at large, before it became fixed, is doubtless connected with its volcanic origin. The Persian armament swept like a blight through the other islands, and soon appeared off the coast of Eubœa. Meeting with no resistance on landing, they disembarked their cavalry, and laid siege to Eretria, which was betrayed to them after six days of severe fighting. The town was burnt and sacked, and the inhabitants carried away captive. They expected from the threats of Darius the worst of fates ; but when they reached Susa, that forgiving monarch settled them peaceably at a place called Ardericca, where there was a famous well which produced salt, bitumen, and petroleum. Herodotus saw them there, and mentions particularly that they had not forgotten their Greek.

The Athenians, after the fall of Eretria, must have felt much as the Jews did when Sennacherib appeared before their walls, and Rabshakeh boasted that all the kings and gods on his march had fallen before him. But when they heard that the Persians had actually disembarked at Marathon, they must have felt as England would have felt had the news come that Buonaparte had landed in Pevensey Bay, close to the ominous field of Hastings. For Marathon had not as yet become a synonym for Victory ; on the contrary, Pisistratus had beaten the Athenian commons on that plain, and his son Hippias was now with the Persian host in a temper which, they might be sure, had not improved with old age, exile, and disappointment.

It was Hippias who, from old association, and thinking the plain well suited for cavalry manœuvres, had guided the Persians to the strand of Marathon (now Vrana). The plain itself is shaped somewhat like a thin crescent, the sea washing its concavity, and mountains rising behind its convex rim, which opens out at the back into two valleys. Between both a spur runs out, commanding the two gaps. The slope of this spur was the key of the Athenian position. The extent of level ground is about six miles long, as measured by the curve of the bay, and about a mile and a half broad. But although along the whole of the six miles there is a fine sandy beach for landing, behind it, a considerable part—more than a third—of the crescent-plain is occupied by two swamps, one of which is of considerable extent. Here the Persian army awaited the mustering of the Athenians. Why they did not push on at once into the country is a mystery.

It so chanced that, just before the Persians came, a heaven-sent commander dropped, as it were, from the clouds into the fortunate city of Athens. The spirits of men rose when it was rumoured that Miltiades, the son of Cimon, had come home. Herodotus gives us his family history, which was curious enough.

The Chersonese is a tongue of land jutting into the sea from the Thracian mainland. Its people being annoyed by the incursions of some savages to the north, as the Britons were by the Picts and Scots, sent a deputation to the oracle at Delphi to ask for advice. The god told them to choose as king the first man who should welcome them to his house. For some time they traversed almost hopelessly various parts

of Greece ; but Greek respectability was not likely to invite into its sanctuary a party of strangers “dressed in outlandish garments, and carrying long spears in their hands.” At last in Attica they passed by the countryhouse of one Miltiades, son of Cypselus (a descendant of the hero of the “meal-bin”).* The democratic Tyranny had deprived him of occupation, for he was a nobleman of the old school, who came of “a four-horse family,” says our historian—had won, indeed, the great Olympic race himself—who traced his pedigree back to Ajax, and was connected with the proud Isagorids. So he sat idle in his porch, heartily sick of Pisistratus and democratic respectability. Seeing the foreign wayfarers pass, out of mere curiosity, as it would seem, he invited them into his house and entertained them. The interview was satisfactory ; Miltiades consented to take out a few colonists with them to their wilds, and be their king. The first thing he did was to build them a kind of Hadrian’s wall to keep back their Picts and Scots. His nephew, Stesagoras, the son of Cimon, succeeded him, and was succeeded, on his violent death, by his brother, this second Miltiades, who came out from Athens, and made himself by a *coup d’état* despot of the whole Chersonese—a great sin in the eyes of his democratic countrymen, who brought him to trial for it when he came to Athens, but condoned it on account of his services to the state. When the Persians, in their march of vengeance after the Ionian revolt, came to the Hellespont, he ran the gauntlet of their fleet successfully with five galleys ; but he left in their hands one ship, on board of which was his son. As Miltiades had advised the king’s bridge

* See p. 103.

over the Danube to be destroyed, his captors thought, when they sent the youth to Darius, that he would punish the father in his person ; but, with his usual magnanimity, the king gave him a house and estate, and a Persian wife, by whom he became the founder of a Persian family.

Miltiades, immediately on his return to Athens, was impeached by his democratic enemies for "tyranny" in his colony ; but, having cleared his character, he was at once appointed one of the ten Athenian generals, of whom Callimachus, the polemarch, or minister of war, was another. They could not have been much more than colonels, except on the days when they held the command in rotation ; an arrangement which, to our English notions, would be fatal to the success of any great enterprise. The Athenians were as fond of decimals as the Persians of the number seven. A traditional 10,000 Athenians were engaged on the Greek side at Marathon. But the Greeks were apt to underestimate their own numbers and exaggerate those of the enemy. Supposing the Persian force to amount in all to 200,000 men, making deductions for the guard of the ships and the absent cavalry, they probably brought not many more than 110,000 into the field, of whom 30,000 were heavy armed. The Athenian light armed must also be reckoned, and if their whole force is put at 18,000, with 2000 Plataeans, the odds still leave abundant room for Hellenic self-glorification. Before the Athenians left their city, they had sent to Sparta for succour. Their courier is said to have reached Sparta on foot—a distance of 140 English miles—on the second day. But the Spartans had an inveterate superstition against marching until the

moon was full. They were possibly in no great hurry to help Athens, as, when they did come, it was too late, and only with two thousand men. The Athenians had already drawn up their line of battle in the sacred close of Hercules, at Marathon, when they were joined by the Plataeans. The Plataeans had suffered much in time past from their neighbours the Thebans, and in return for substantial protection had bound themselves to Athens; in fact the little state became a satellite of the greater.

The Greek forces seem to have occupied the space between Mount Kotroni and Argaliki, resting their wings against the heights, which prevented their being outflanked. There was hesitation as to beginning the attack. On the one hand, the Athenians rested on their own supplies, and could take their time; and the Spartan contingent, though tardy, might be expected to march in six days, when the moon would be at the full. On the other hand, treachery was feared from the party of Hippias in Athens, if there was any delay. The generals were equally divided, but Miltiades was for immediate action, and persuaded Callimachus to give his casting-vote with him. By what arrangement it happened is not clear, but it is certain that when the day for action came, the command was in the hands of Miltiades. Why the attack was made on the particular day it is difficult to determine. Some suppose that Miltiades, with an inspiration like that of Wellington at Salamanca, saw his advantage in a temporary absence of the Persian cavalry. Certain it is that no cavalry are heard of in the action, which seems singular, as Hippias is said to have chosen the spot for their bene-

fit.* The armies stood fronting each other. Callimachus was on the right wing, and the Plataeans on the left. The right was always the post of honour and of danger, because the last man had his side unprotected by a shield. When the Greek line was formed, it appeared too short as compared with that of the Persians; so Miltiades, no doubt with some misgivings, drew troops from his centre and massed them on the wings, in order that they might deploy when they came into the open. There was nearly a mile of ground to be cleared before arriving at the enemy's line; and it was advisable to lose as few men as possible from arrows before coming to the thrust of spears. Miltiades therefore gave the signal to charge at quick step, which was increased to a run when within range. The Persians, on their side, prepared to give them a warm reception, though they thought the Greeks mad for charging so wildly, unsupported by archers or cavalry. But they had scarcely time for admiration of their enemies before they were in upon them. The two armies wrestled long and desperately before advantage declared itself for either. At last the swaying line of combat parted into three fragments, which moved in different directions. In the centre, where the Persians and Sacæ were posted, the Athenians were rolled back, probably no farther than the slope of Kotroni, where they could stand at bay, though Herodotus says they were pursued up the valley. On the wings they were

* Mr Blakesley thinks that they had not yet been disembarked, but were still at Eretria; and perhaps it was for this reason that the Persians kept their position close to the shore for so long a time, and did not attempt to outflank by the hills an enemy numerically so inferior.

victorious; and the allies of the Persians who were there, retiring creditably enough, with their faces to the enemy, did not see the marshes behind them, but floundered into them backwards. There was struggling to regain a footing, and general confusion, of which the Greeks took advantage, and pressed them harder till they were hopelessly broken and discomfited. But the victorious wings now perceived that their own centre was dislocated from them, and had lost ground before the *élite* of the Persian army; they therefore faced about and fell on their flanks. The Persian centre, now engaged on three sides, at last gave way likewise, and fell back in the direction of their galleys. Covered probably by the archers from the decks, most of the troops got safe on board. Then the Greeks raised a yell of disappointment, called for fire to burn the ships, and many rushed into the water to try to board them. One of the foremost of these was Cynegeirus, brother to the poet *Æschylus*; but as he grasped the stern-ornament of a trireme, he dropt back with both his hands chopped off. Some say that he maintained his hold until he lost first one hand, then the other, and lastly his head, as he caught the gunwale with his teeth.

So ended the immortal battle of Marathon, which stands almost alone by the side of Morgarten among the miracles achieved by the inspiration of Freedom. The Persians were sufficiently beaten, but their rout could hardly have been so complete as Herodotus describes, since they had not far to run. They lost six thousand four hundred men, mostly in the swamps, and seven galleys, held back by main force or carried by boarding. It was in the fight at the ships that, besides

Cynegeirus, many Athenians of note fell, amongst them two of the generals, one of whom was Callimachus. The Athenians lost one hundred and ninety-two men in the action. As the greater number are said to have fallen in the attack on the ships, either those who gave way before the Persians and Sacæ were few, or they only suffered a partial repulse. Greek armies, from their formation in compact phalanx, seldom lost many men until they were broken, when their long spears and heavy armament rendered them more defenceless than lighter troops. Marathon afterwards became a household word at Athens, as Waterloo with us. A "man who had fought at Marathon" had a patent of popular nobility. Athenian orators made it a favourite commonplace; and Athenian satirists found it an inexhaustible fund of jest upon the national vanity. Wonderful stories were related in connection with the battle. On the return of Pheidippides the courier from Sparta, he said that as he was crossing a mountain in Arcadia he was accosted by the wood-god Pan, who called to him by name, and complained of his worship being neglected by the Athenians, while he was always well disposed towards them. In consequence, a temple was dedicated to Pan under the Acropolis, and he was honoured with annual sacrifices and a torch-race. National heroes were supposed to have been present, and to have assisted in the fight; and one Athenian was suddenly struck blind in the thick of the fray by (as he declared) the passing before his eyes of a supernatural giant, who slew the man at his side.

When the Persians had re-embarked, their fleet doubled Cape Sunium, and made a demonstration in the direction of the harbour of Athens, with the hope

of surprising the city ; but the Athenians returned in time to cover it. There was an ugly rumour, which Herodotus entirely disbelieves, that a shield was hoisted on the walls as a telegraphic signal by the Alcmaeonids. This, doubtless, emanated from the opposite faction ; for the Isagorids and Alcmaeonids of Athens hated each other as cordially, and slandered each other as unscrupulously, as the English Tories and Whigs of the time of Queen Anne.

The tale of the subsequent fate of Miltiades is one of the most painful passages in history. In the first flush of his popularity, he asked the Athenians to give him seventy ships fully equipped, only deigning to tell them that he would get them gold in abundance. They asked no questions, but gave him the fleet. He had a private grudge against the people of Paros, and he now sailed to the island of marble, and laid siege to its town. His patience began to be at an end, when a certain priestess offered to forward his views. In leaping the wall of the sacred precincts after an interview with her, he dislocated his thigh. He then returned to Athens disabled, and as soon as he arrived was put upon his trial on the capital charge of having deceived the state, his accuser being Xanthippus, father of the great Pericles. The crippled hero lay on a couch in court while his friends defended him. They could not say a word in extenuation of the Parian escapade, but rested his defence on the fact that he had saved Athens at Marathon, and regained Lemnos. But, unfortunately for Miltiades, this was not the first time that he had had to appear on a charge of like nature. It seemed as if he wished to make himself despot of Paros—perhaps even despot of

Athens—as he had made himself despot of the Chersonese. It was not for this that they had got rid of Hippias. If he commanded well at Marathon, so did the other generals, two of them now no more ; nay, every man who fought in those ranks seemed as good a hero as he, for Marathon, like Inkermann, was a “soldier’s battle.” If he took Lemnos, he had missed taking Paros, and wasted the public money at a time when the treasury was low. They had not the heart to condemn him to death, for as he lay before them he seemed to bear death’s mark already—and, indeed, it must have appeared to them as impossible as for the king of Italy to punish Garibaldi for treason after his wound at Aspromonte ; but they condemned him in the expenses of the abortive expedition, amounting to fifty talents (above £12,000). As his son Cimon was able to pay these heavy damages, his judges seem to have had no intention of absolutely ruining him. Soon afterwards, physical mortification in the injured limb, assisted no doubt by mental, put an untimely end to the days of the Man of Marathon.

CHAPTER X.

THERMOPYLÆ.

“Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner, and bugle, and fife,
To the death, for their native land.”

—TENNYSON, “Ma id.”

AFTER the terrible defeat of his best generals at Marathon, Darius thought the Athenians worth his personal attention. That battle took place in the autumn of B.C. 490 ; and the king occupied the next three years in preparations for a new expedition, which he intended to lead in person. But a revolt in Egypt divided his attention ; and he was considering in which direction he was most wanted, when he was summoned from the scene by a mightier monarch than himself, after a reign of six-and-thirty years. His fourth son, Xerxes, succeeded him—not his first-born, Artabazanes ; because Xerxes had been born in the purple, and of a daughter of Cyrus ; whereas the elder sons had been born when Darius was a subject, and of the daughter of a subject. Xerxes soon disposed of the Egyptian revolt, and left his brother Achæmenes satrap of the country. Then he took up the great quarrel bequeathed

him by his father, but after many hesitations and vacillations, signified in the narrative of Herodotus by dreams and their interpretations, and opposite opinions said to have been given by Artabanus, who dissuaded, and Mardonius, who was in favour of an invasion. The young king was evidently afraid of compromising his newly-inherited prosperity. He was of a luxurious character, not craving, like Darius, for barren honour; and if he left the Greeks alone, it would be a long time before they found their way to Susa. When the bolder counsels at last prevailed, he resolved to make matters as safe as possible. Grecian liberty was not to be stabbed, but stifled, to death. He would pour out all Asia upon it. So he took four good years in preparation, gathering a host of armed, half-armed, and almost unarmed men, such as has hardly been seen before or since. The soldiers, with the exception of the select few, carried the rudest national weapons—bows and arrows, pole-axes, “morning-stars,” even staves and lassoes. Some rate the host as high as five millions; others give less than half that number. The men were measured, like dry goods—not counted; that is, a pen was made which could hold ten thousand, through which the whole army passed in successive batches. It is time, perhaps, that a common error should be exploded, into which, however, it would be impossible for any attentive reader of Herodotus to fall. No schoolboy believes now, as elderly men did when they were boys, that the French are a nation of cowards. But it is possible for careless readers of Greek history to believe that the Persians were cowards; else, they might say, how should they have been beaten by

so small a number of Greeks? And were they not obliged to flog their soldiers into action? Perhaps this was only a Greek version of the fact that corporal punishment was an institution in their army. Amongst the Greeks it was confined to slaves. The lash has not prevented Russians and Austrians—not to mention others—from fighting well. Perhaps the native Persians, especially those of noble birth, were personally braver than the Greeks. But the Greeks had the immense advantage of discipline. In a disciplined army every man has the eyes of his comrades on him, and if fear is felt, it cannot act for very shame, and because it is counteracted by mechanical obedience. Aristotle assigns a special kind of courage to national militias, which all Greek armies were, which he calls the political courage, springing from the feeling of what is due from the individual to the community. This may not be courage of the most romantic kind, but it appears to answer its end perfectly; and Nelson thought it good enough to appeal to in his famous watchword, still written round the wheel of our war-ships—"England expects every man to do his duty." This kind of courage culminated in Leonidas. The Persian officers were even desperately brave, and always led the charges in person, which accounts for their great relative loss in battles. The Greek officers took their chance with the rest, being indistinguishable from the privates in the phalanx. Again, the numbers of their armies were a positive disadvantage to the Persians; for most of their auxiliary troops, when brought into contact with real soldiers, were as sheep brought to the shambles. The Greeks were also more efficiently armed. The Persian infantry were archers, carrying also pikes and daggers, who (like

the English crossbow-man with his pavoise-bearer in the fifteenth century) made a bulwark of their great oblong wicker shields, as may be seen now in the Nimrud sculptures, and shot from behind them. But when this bulwark was once forced, the Persians had no protection but their light armour against the strong pikes of the Greeks. Our archers turned the scale of battle against superior forces at Cressy and Poitiers, because they were the only body which had at all the character of regular troops.

The Persian officers had in some respects become luxurious and effeminate even in the time of Darius, riding in palanquins, keeping sumpter-camels, and so forth; but they do not appear to have been worse than our Anglo-Indians, who have never been reckoned deficient in valour. The French *mousquetaires*, who fought under Marshal Saxe, were as celebrated for their foppery as their gallantry in the field. "Hold hard—the dandies are coming!" was the word passed from one British soldier to another, when their laced coats and three-cornered hats came in sight.

There is no need to follow in detail all the pomp and circumstance of the slow march of Xerxes into Greece. The vast army crossed from Abydos to Sestos by a double pontoon bridge; and Xerxes, like the spoiled child of the harem, is said to have ordered the Hellespont to be scourged, and chains to be thrown into it, and branding-irons to be plunged into the hissing water, because a storm had destroyed the work when first attempted. He is also said to have cut in halves the eldest son of a wealthy Lydian, who had made him an offer of all his property, but requested that one of his sons might be left behind; making his troops defile

between the severed portions, by way of raising their enthusiasm. A similar story is told of Darius, which appears, in his case, incredible. The great interest of the expedition begins when it arrived where resistance might be expected from the Greeks. The land-force which marched round the coast was accompanied by more than twelve hundred war-galleys, besides a multitude of other craft. The navy passed through a new-made ship-canal, by which the voyage round the formidable headland of Athos was avoided. Our author says the work was done in mere bravado, since the ships might have been drawn across the narrow neck of land with less labour and cost. It is remarkable, in the cutting of this canal (a work of three years, the traces of which are still distinctly visible), that all the other nations were senseless enough to make its sides perpendicular, which, from the continual landslips, gave them double trouble; while the Phœnicians alone proved themselves as good "navvies" as navigators, by making their cutting twice as broad at top as at bottom.

The news of the approach of this overwhelming host struck the Greeks with consternation, and all the northern tribes, including the Thebans, submitted to the invader. The Athenians were alarmed by dark oracles pointing apparently to their extermination, but containing one saving clause, that they might find safety in their "wooden walls." They wisely interpreted this to mean their ships. Their troublesome war with the Æginetans proved now an advantage, as it had forced them to make large additions to their navy, the former poverty of which has been mentioned. Envoys were sent for aid to Argos, Sicily, Coreyra, and Crete. The Argives might be well excused for declining, as Cleo-

menes had just massacred six thousand out of their not probably more than ten thousand citizens. Gelon, the king of Syracuse, would have assisted, had not Sicily been just then invaded by a miscellaneous army of three hundred thousand men under the command of the Carthaginian Hamilcar, possibly induced, through the Phœnicians, to make this diversion in favour of Xerxes. Gelon had the good fortune to destroy this host in the decisive battle of Himera, on the same day as the Greek victory at Salamis. The Corcyræans temporised, with their historical selfishness ; the Cretans excused themselves on the faith of an oracle ; so the Greeks proper were left to face their terrible enemy alone, and even among them there were many craven spirits who took the side of the Persian.

Thessaly, through which the course of the invaders lay, is a basin of mountains, like Bohemia, cracked by the gorge of the Peneus, as Bohemia is by that of the Elbe. This basin was doubtless, as Herodotus says, once a lake, until it was tapped by some convulsion of nature. Xerxes thought flooding the country quite feasible, by damming up the outlet of the river : no such measure, however, was necessary. At first the Greeks had intended to make their stand there, in the Vale of Tempe, celebrated for its beauty. Overhung by plane-woods, the high cliffs are festooned with creepers, and diversified with underwood, approaching here and there so closely as to leave barely room for the road and river. But they gave up this position when they found that Thessaly could easily be entered by another road over the mountains. They drew back towards the isthmus : and Thessaly at once made terms with the Persian king.

It was now decided to make the first stand at the narrow pass of Thermopylæ (Hotwells-Gate), the key of Greece itself. The river Spercheius has since established a tract of alluvial deposit between the mountain and the sea, but the hot springs are still there, in pools of clear water, and the other features of the scene remain much as they were in the time of Herodotus. The pass leads along the shore from Thessaly to Locris. The Grecian fleet were to support the army in the narrow strait by Artemisium, on the head of Eubœa (Negropont). As the Persian host rolled on, it had increased like a snowball, imbibing the contingents of all the districts that submitted. But the elements were still against the invaders. A storm arose when their fleet was off Magnesia, attributed by the Athenians to the intervention of Boreas (the North Wind), who had married a daughter of their mythical king Erechtheus. At least four hundred galleys perished, and so much wealth was cast ashore that the wreckers on the coast became rich men; and the Persians soon after lost fifteen ships more, which mistook the enemy's fleet for their own. Xerxes was himself with the land-force, which had now occupied the territory of Trachis, north of the pass of Thermopylæ. The little Greek army had posted itself behind an ancient wall, which barred the pass, and which they had repaired, at a spot where there was only room for a single chariot-road. The nucleus of the force (in all under 8000 of all arms) was three hundred thorough-bred Spartans, each attended by his seven Helots. They were all fathers of families, who had left sons at home to succeed them. At their head was Leonidas, now senior king of Sparta. This

small force was expected to be able to hold the pass until the rest were disengaged ; for the Spartans were keeping a local feast, and the other Greeks were engaged at the great Olympian festival. Perhaps the very extremity of the danger made the Greeks put their religious duties in the foreground ; and, indeed, Leonidas and his men went out as to an expected sacrifice. A Persian scout reported to Xerxes that he found the Spartans busy dressing their hair. In surprise the king appealed for explanation to his refugee guest Demaratus, the banished king of Sparta, whom he had brought to Greece in his train. The Spartan warned him that it betokened, on the part of his countrymen, a resistance to the death. Usually careless of their dress, there was one occasion when they polished their arms, combed their long hair and wreathed it with flowers, and put on scarlet vests ; it was when they expected a battle which they might not survive. Xerxes waited four days to see if they would retire, and then ordered his Medes and Cissians to bring them to him in chains. For a whole day these made repeated attacks, and were as often repulsed with heavy loss. The Persian "Immortals" were then launched at them, and fared no better. These troops were so called because they were always kept up to the exact number of ten thousand,* and represented the Imperial Guard. Often pretending flight, so as to draw them on in loose pursuit, the Greeks turned on their enemies and butchered them. One would have thought that this affair in the front would have made little impression on that dense host ; but

* The forty members of the French Academy are so nicknamed for the same reason.

Xerxes is said to have leapt thrice from his throne as the wave of disturbance reached him, fearing for his whole army. On the third day a native guide came and told the king of a pass over the mountains, by which the Greeks might be taken in rear, and he selected Hydarnes, the commander of the Immortals, for this important service. The crest of this pass (the existence of which the Greeks had learned too late) was watched on their behalf by a thousand Phocians, who were warned by hearing the rustling of the dry leaves of the oak-wood, but thinking an attack on their own post was intended, retired to a more defensible position, and let Hydarnes pass on. The way in which the little band of heroes received the announcement that their position had been turned should be told in Herodotus's own words :—

“First, the soothsayer Megistias, as he inspected the sacrifices, warned them of the death which awaited them with the morrow's dawn. Then came some deserters, who told them of the march of the Persians round the hill. All this was while it was still night. Then, when the day had broken, their scouts came running down from the heights with the same news. Thereupon the Greeks took counsel, and their opinions were divided : for some would not hear of quitting their post, while others advised to do so. Then they parted asunder, and some went off and dispersed each to their own cities, and some prepared to remain there with Leonidas. It is even said that Leonidas himself sent them away, anxious that they should not be slain ; but for himself and the Spartans who were there, it was not seemly, he said, for them to leave a post which they had once undertaken to keep.”

Those who chose the nobler alternative, besides the Spartans and their Laconian subjects and Helot slaves, who could not help themselves, were seven hundred Thespians and four hundred Thebans—the latter, our author says, detained as hostages, but probably proscribed at home for refusing to submit, like the rest, to Xerxes. The struggle now could have but one issue. Xerxes ordered a general attack at daybreak, and Leonidas, in order to sell the lives of his men as dearly as possible, ordered them to advance from the defile itself, and attack in the open. The Persians perished in crowds—some driven into the sea, some trampled to death by their comrades, others urged forward by stripes only to fall on the deadly lances of the Greeks.

Dead weight, however, began to tell against the latter, when they had broken their spears in barbarian bodies, and had used their swords till they were weary. At last Leonidas fell, and over his body the struggle was renewed more furiously than ever.

“The dead around him on that day
In a semicircle lay.”

In that swathe of corpses were found two brothers of Xerxes. Four times the Greeks repulsed the enemy, and at last bore off the body of their king. They had but short breathing-space. Their hour was come, when the fatal troops of Hydarnes came down the hills in their rear. The survivors drew back into the narrowest part of the pass, within the wall, and posted themselves on a hillock, where a stone lion afterwards marked the resting-place of Leonidas. So did the sur

vivors of the Khyber Pass massacre in 1841 draw together for a last stand on the hillock at Gundamuck, whence a single officer escaped to Peshawur to tell that the British army was exterminated.

The four hundred Thebans saved themselves by a timely surrender; the remaining four thousand Greeks were buried in a hail-shower of missiles. Herodotus awards the palm of valour to a Spartan wit, who, when he was told that the Persian arrows would darken the air, said, "Then we shall have but a shadow-fight" (or sham-fight). Such a man would have appreciated the ghastly witticisms of the guillotine in the French Revolution. Xerxes, with an indecency towards the dead quite opposed to all Persian usage, had the head of Leonidas cut off, and fixed upon a pole.

The Greek combined fleet was commanded by the Spartan Eurybiades. The Spartans would only co-operate on condition that the command should be theirs, though they only furnished ten ships, while the Athenians mustered one hundred and twenty-seven. Spartan provincialism forms a strong contrast to the national patriotism of the little state of Platæa, which threw itself heart and soul into the cause of Greek independence. Though landsmen, the Platæans helped to man the Athenian fleet. They were afterwards rewarded by vile ingratitude from Sparta, and lukewarm friendship from Athens.

The whole naval strength counted two hundred and seventy-one three-banked galleys. The Persian disaster in the storm had now been balanced by a Greek disaster in the field; and the barometer of Hellenic confidence fell again. There was even talk of

leaving Eubœa to its fate, and retreating southwards. Themistocles, the Athenian commander, was a man who had raised himself to a foremost position from small beginnings, which may account for his understanding so well the use and power of money. If Mammon was one of his gods, he could make him his servant for good as well as for evil. The Eubœans, alarmed for their families and goods, besought the Spartan admiral not to desert them; and finding him impracticable, applied to Themistocles—this time backing their prayers with a present of thirty talents. Themistocles knew Eurybiades better than they, and gave him five talents out of the thirty, as if they had come from himself, or from the treasury of the Athenians, and three more to Adeimantus the Corinthian, whose valour, among all the national commanders, seemed most strongly tempered with discretion. The rest of this secret-service money he kept for himself.

The Persians, in great fear lest the Greek fleet should escape them under cover of night, detached two hundred ships, with orders to sail round outside Eubœa, and back up the strait between the island and the mainland, and so block in the enemy.

The battle—or rather battles, for there were three—of Artemisium began by desultory and provocative attacks on the part of the Greeks, who, when they had brought the whole Persian fleet upon them, rolled theirs up like a hedgehog or porcupine, with the spines outside. They drew their sterns all together, and formed a circle with their sharp beaks turned every way. In the first *mêlée* thirty ships were taken from the Persians. The battle lasted through the midsummer evening, and then each fleet withdrew to its

mooring. The sea was like oil, and that ominous calm reigned from which better sailors than the Greeks would have foretold storm. At midnight it thundered and lightened on Mount Pelion, the wind rose, and the wrecks and bodies were drifted to the station of the Persian fleet, and struck the crews with dismay. But it fared worse with their detached division, which was utterly destroyed on the rocks on the outer coast of Eubœa. Thus did the good wind Boreas still seem to help his friends. A reinforcement of fifty-three fresh Athenian galleys came up at daybreak, having escaped the storm inside the island. The ancient war-ships, even the great "five-bankers" of the Romans and Carthaginians, could stand no more weather than a river-steamer; while their great rounded Dutch-built merchant-ships would ride out a moderate gale fairly. On the afternoon of the second day the Greeks attacked again, and sank some Cilician vessels. On the third day about noon the Persians began the attack, while the Greeks kept their station at Artemisium. There was much fouling among the Persians from their closely-packed vessels, but they fought well, and neither side could claim much advantage. The Athenians gained most distinction among the allies; and of the Athenians Cleinias, son of Alcibiades, and father of him of that name who afterwards was the representative Athenian of the new school. He had manned and equipped his trireme at his own expense. The Greeks remained masters of the field—that is, of the scene of action, with the bodies and wrecks; but as half the Athenian fleet had been more or less damaged, they decided on withdrawing southward, especially as they now heard of the loss of Thermopylæ. Before he went, Themistocles

had inscriptions graven on the rocks by all the watering-places, exhorting the Ionian Greeks now in the service of Persia to desert. If this had no effect on those to whom they were addressed, it would at any rate make them objects of suspicion to the Persians. Then the Greeks sailed away—the Corinthians first, the Athenians, as became them, last.

While the Persian sailors and marines were wasting the north of Eubœa, a herald came from Xerxes ordering a day's leave ashore to be given, that the crews might view the field of Thermopylæ. On the Greek side were four thousand bodies in a heap, which the king pretended were all Spartans or Thespians; on his side lay about a thousand, scattered all over the field. The rest of the Persians had been carefully buried beforehand; but the trick deceived nobody.

The Persian army now advanced and ravaged Phocis, and on the farther frontier parted into two divisions, the larger entering the friendly territory of Bœotia, and making for Athens—the smaller proceeding towards Delphi. Xerxes was well instructed as to the wealth of Apollo's temple, and must have known by heart all the costly offerings that Croesus had made. The Delphians in dismay consulted their oracle: the god replied that "he could protect his own." Just when the enemy reached the ascent to the temple, a thunderstorm burst forth, and great rocks came rolling down the steep of Parnassus. The Persians fled, and the Delphians, assisted apparently by two supernatural warriors, emerged from their hiding-places and slew the hindermost. The priests of Apollo were doubtless adepts in the machinery of the stage.

CHAPTER XL

SALAMIS.

**"The man of firm and righteous will,
No rabble, clamorous for the wrong,
No tyrant's brow, whose frown may kill,
Can shake the strength that makes him strong:
Not winds, that chafe the sea they sway,
Nor Jove's right hand, with lightning red:
Should Nature's pillared frame give way,
That wreck would strike one fearless head."**
—CONINGTON'S 'Horace.'

SUCH is the portrait of Themistocles, as drawn by Kaulbach of Munich, in his great cartoon of the battle of Salamis. He stands at ease on the deck of his galley, sacrificing to the gods while the battle is ending. We feel that he would be as composed and dignified, only somewhat sadder, if the ruin were coming on him instead of on the enemy. The very self-seeking of this remarkable man in the midst of the most exciting circumstances bears testimony to the admirable balance of his nature. He somewhat resembles Marlborough, of whom, for all his romantic courage, Macaulay too severely says, that in his youth he loved lucre more than wine or women, and in his middle age he loved lucre more than power or glory. But it

must be remembered that Themistocles was a Greek, and the versatile Ulysses is the very type of a Greek hero. It was not in the Greek character to vie with Darius in his right royal disdain of petty advantage and private revenge. The Greeks would have made far better "hucksters" than that king, who was so called by his nobles because he was a good financier. And Themistocles was a first-rate example of the middle-class burgher, as "the curled Alcibiades" was of the "gilded youth" of a cultivated Greek republic. He was Presence-of-mind incarnate. But he was honest withal—with the honesty of a good Jew with whom one might safely deposit millions, but who would not fail to make every shilling breed. And he was a patriot—one who would die for his country at any moment, but was far too sensible to believe in her or to trust her. The sequel of his life showed that he was right. Themistocles, though not the highest type of man, is perhaps the most perfect specimen of the Greek on record.

The Athenians had hoped that the combined Greek forces would make a stand in Bœotia, but in this they were disappointed. The primary object of the Spartans was to take care of themselves; their secondary object to save Greece, that they might rule it. They wished the Athenians out of their way, but they felt that if the fire spread to them, it would be coming somewhat close to their own home. Could they not sacrifice Athens, and save the Athenians, who would then be their obedient servants? So they withdrew their land-forces behind the Isthmus of Corinth, which they proceeded to fortify; while the combined fleet was in-

duced, by the entreaties of the Athenians, to anchor off the island of Salamis, to which most of the latter proceeded to transfer for safety their families and goods.

The Greeks had received reinforcements which made their fleet larger now than when it had fought at Artemisium. The Athenians now furnished one hundred and eighty of the three hundred and seventy-eight galleys. The Persian army entered Athens only to find an empty city—none had remained in it but some of the very poorest, or a few obstinate heads who saw in the palisade of the citadel the “wooden walls” of the oracle, and strengthened it with planks accordingly. The Persians encamped on the Areopagus (the Mars’ Hill of St Paul), and shot lighted arrows at the barricade, which was soon in flames. But their storming-parties were foiled by a gallant defence, until a few soldiers scaled a place where no watch was kept, and were followed by others, who put the weak garrison to the sword. The temple of the goddess was plundered and burnt, and Xerxes sent a messenger home to Susa to announce that his vengeance was complete.

The sacrifice of Athens was unavoidable, yet it greatly affected the allies, who thought of withdrawing their fleet to the isthmus. But the Athenians felt that this step would almost certainly lead to its breaking up. There was a long war of words between Themistocles, Eurybiades, and Adeimantus. This last was insolent to the Athenian. “You have no country now,” said he, “and therefore no vote.” Themistocles replied, that with two hundred well-manned ships the Athenians would find a country wherever they chose to land. At last the threat that the Athenians would all emigrate to Italy, and give up

the war, prevailed. And preparations were made for battle.

The time was naturally one which abounded with portents and prodigies, which were generally interpreted to the disadvantage of the enemy. It was the time of the year of the great procession in honour of Ceres and Bacchus from Eleusis to Athens. It could not be held now, in the presence of the enemy, but a chant was heard in the air, as from no mortal choir, and a column of dust was seen to rise, and spread into a heavy cloud which overshadowed the Persian armament. Some enthusiasts averred that they saw the heroes Ajax, Teucer, and Achilles, battling for their homesteads in Salamis and Ægina. Their images, at all events, were brought out to battle, for good-luck. The Spanish Carlists, when they appointed the image of *Nostra Señora de los Dolores* generalissimo of their forces, went a step further; and this was in our remembrance.

The Persian fleet had already lost six hundred and fifty ships, but Herodotus says that it had been reinforced to the original number by the contingents from the islands and some maritime states—an assertion which seems hardly probable. At Phalerum, the harbour of Athens, a council of war was held. The best head in the fleet of Xerxes was a woman's—Artemisia, queen of Halicarnassus. This Amazon of the sea seemed almost a match for that goddess of War and Wisdom whom the Athenians worshipped. She always appears a special favourite with her townsman Herodotus, who nevertheless is said to have found the tyranny of her family unendurable. She advised Xerxes to bide his time, and let the Greek confederacy fall to pieces from internal dissensions. But the

party of action prevailed ; the land-forces marched on the isthmus, where Cleombrotus, brother of Leonidas, now commanded, and the fleet weighed anchor.

The Spartans and other Greeks within the Peninsula had meanwhile been working night and day, throwing up a wall of defence across the isthmus. Their panic communicated itself to the fleet, so that Themistocles was obliged at last to resort to a desperate stratagem. He sent to the Persian commanders secretly, to tell them that he was a well-wisher of the king's, and that the Greeks meditated flight. The Persians believed it, and made such arrangements of their forces, under cover of the night, as would effectually prevent the escape of their enemies. The Greek council of captains was still in fierce debate when the Athenian Aristides arrived from Ægina, where he was undergoing ostracism (he was said to have been banished because the people were tired of hearing him called "the Just"), and said that he had just succeeded in getting through the enemy, who had completely surrounded the Greeks. All now made up their minds for the inevitable fight, and the commanders addressed the crews—Themistocles, with the most powerful eloquence. But the enemy attacked so fiercely that the Greeks backed water, till Ameinias the Athenian, whose blood was hotter than that of the rest, darted forward and engaged an enemy's ship. The two became entangled, and others coming up to their aid, the conflict became general. The Persians themselves fought better than at Artemisium, although they became involved in the same inextricable confusion, while the Greeks never allowed their line to be broken. The very circumstance that the Persians were under the eye of their king, who over

looked the battle from a neighbouring promontory, told in one respect against them, since it caused those in the rear to press to the front, and thus get involved with their own retreating ships; so that a tangled ball of hulls, oars, and rigging, was formed, which the freely-moving Greeks could strike at and tear to pieces at their leisure.

The vanquished showed in some instances great gallantry. The liege lady of Herodotus, Queen Artemisia, distinguished herself as much in the fight as in the council, but in a way of questionable morality. Being hard pressed by an Athenian galley, she turned on one belonging to her own allies, and sank it. The Athenian thought he must have made a mistake, and sheered off, while the unsuspecting Xerxes admired the good service his fair ally seemed to be doing. "My men," said he, "fight like women, and my women like men." Such cool effrontery would have been unintelligible to a Persian. There was a petty king on board the galley which she had sunk; but drowned men tell no tales.

A brother of the king, Ariabignes, the admiral, perished, and a vast number of noble Persians. The Greeks whose ships were sunk mostly saved themselves by swimming, while the Persians lost more drowned than killed in action. The fugitives tried to reach Phalerum, but there were Æginetans outside, who swooped on them like falcons. The stage-coward of the battles of Artemisium and Salamis is the unfortunate Adeimantus, who is accused of attempted flight. Why was Herodotus, usually so impartial, so spiteful against him and the Corinthians? He may have relied on Athenian information, or perhaps some general impression of Greek half-heartedness must have come from Halicarnassian or Ionian sources. Æschylus,

in his magnificent tragedy of "The Persians," beside which the prose of Herodotus is tame, speaks of nothing but patriotic zeal, singing of pæans, and joyous alacrity. The hero of Waterloo is said to have modestly observed to some ladies who complimented him on a description of the battle, "I ought to know all about it, for I was there myself." So *Æschylus* ought to be our best authority for the battle of Salamis, as he was present himself, probably in the ship of his brother Ameinias. According to him, it was the Persians who were caught in a trap by Themistocles : thinking the Greeks were in retreat, they had made their arrangements for chase and not for action, which rendered their discomfiture more easy ; since not only did those who came up break their fighting order, but, as at Artemisium, they had detached a considerable squadron to block the entrance to the strait. The poet describes the chase as lasting till midnight, in the open sea, the Greeks destroying the helpless enemy "like fishermen harpooning in a shoal of tunny-fish." All the shore of Attica was strewn with wrecks.

"Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
 Behind Morea's hills the setting sun ;
 Not as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
 But one unclouded blaze of living light !
 O'er the hushed deep the yellow beam he throws,
 Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
 On old *Ægina's* rock, and *Hydra's* isle,
 The god of gladness sheds his parting smile ;
 O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
 Though there his altars are no more divine.
 Descending fast, the mountain-shadows kiss
 Thy glorious gulf, unconquered Salamis !"*

* Byron--"The Corsair."

But never did the sun of Greece set on a scene so memorable, and so beautiful in one sense, in the midst of its terror, as on that autumn evening in the year 480 B.C. There was yet more to be done, but Greece and civilisation were safe.

The destruction of the grand fleet necessitated the retreat of the heterogeneous multitude which called itself the grand army, for it depended on the fleet for most of its supplies. But it was hoped that a picked force might still succeed, and Xerxes left behind 300,000 troops under the command of Mardonius, who went into winter quarters in Thessaly, when he started homewards with all possible speed. This flight may have had State reasons for it, like that of Napoleon from Russia, for the outlying provinces were always ready for insurrection; but, considering his character, the simple interpretation of his conduct appears the most probable, that he was thoroughly cowed. Themistocles wished to follow up the victory by hunting the fugitives from island to island, and then destroying the bridge of boats over the Hellespont. When he was overruled by Eurybiades, he gave out that he had changed his mind, and sent a faithful slave to find Xerxes, and tell him that, out of personal goodwill to his majesty, Themistocles had prevented the Greeks from destroying the bridge.

An unusually early winter, as in the Russian campaign of 1812, added to the sufferings of the retreat. According to the tragedian Æschylus, great numbers perished in attempting to cross the frozen Strymon, thus forestalling the Beresina disaster. The Hellespont bridge had been broken up, not by the Greeks but by a storm; but there was no difficulty in

ferrying across the miserable remnant in boats. At Abydos they came on supplies, and many who had survived starvation on grass and tree-bark died of surfeit. One version of the account makes Xerxes leave his army on the Strymon, and take ship himself for Asia. A storm coming on, the ship was in such danger that the pilot declared that there was no chance of safety unless some of those on board would sacrifice themselves to lighten it, and appealed to the loyalty of the Persians, who accordingly leapt overboard. It is added that, on coming safely to land, the king presented the pilot with a golden crown for saving his own life, and then had him beheaded for causing the death of so many of his gallant servants. The latter part looks like the repetition of an anecdote of Cambyses ; and indeed Herodotus scarcely believes the story, as he observes that the Persians might have been sent below, and the Phœnician crew sacrificed. It did not seem to strike him that sailors are of more use in a storm than the best soldiers, and the self-devoting loyalty of the Persians to their monarch's person is well known.

The Greeks passed an anxious winter, for Mardonius remained in Thessaly, making his preparations for action in the spring. Their allied fleet, a hundred and ten strong, was persuaded to come as far as Delos by an embassy from Asia (one of whom was an Herodotus, possibly a relative of our author), who represented that the Greek colonies there were ripe for revolt. They were, however, deterred for the present from proceeding farther ; possibly because a Lacedæmonian, naturally a landsman, was first in command. Mardonius in the mean time spent the winter in con-

sulting oracles, the answers of which do not seem to have been particularly encouraging, as he afterwards resorted to the more statesmanlike measure of endeavouring to detach the Athenians from the Greek alliance. For this mission he selected Alexander, the son of Amyntas, prince of Macedon. The Spartans, hearing of it, sent ambassadors on their part to beseech them not to desert the cause of Greece. The Athenians, with something of a lofty contempt, bade them have no fear, and told Alexander that they would carry on the war with the destroyers of their city and temples "so long as the sun held its course in heaven"—and warned him, as he valued his safety, never again to bring them a like proposal. They were terribly in earnest; for when one Lycidas, a fellow-townsmen, counselled submission on another occasion, **they stoned him to death.**

CHAPTER XII.

PLATÆA AND MYCÆLE.

“ A day of onsets of despair !
Dashed on every rocky square,
Their surging charges foamed themselves away.
Last the Prussian trumpet blew ;
Through the long-tormented air
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept, and charged, and overthrew.”

—TENNYSON : “ Ode on the Death
of the Duke of Wellington.”

THE concluding act of the great historical drama opens with the spring of B.C. 479. Mardonius has come south from Thessaly, and is gleaning in Athens whatever the spoiler, Xerxes, had left. The Athenians are again in their island-asylum of Salamis. The Spartans are marching on the Isthmus of Corinth, under the command of Pausanias, who had succeeded his father Cleombrotus in the regency and the guardianship of the young son of Leonidas, who did not live to reign. After a demonstration towards Megara, where he hoped to cut off the advanced-guard of the allies, Mardonius proceeded into the Theban territory, where he constructed a vast fortified camp on the bank of the river Asopus. A general ad-

vance was now made by the Peloponnesians from the isthmus to Eleusis, where they were joined by the Athenian contingent from Salamis. When they had ascertained where the Persians were, they set themselves in array along the highlands of Cithæron. As they seemed indisposed to come down into the plain, Mardonius sent his cavalry to feel their position, under the command of Masistius.

This Murat of the Persian army was a handsome giant, who rode a white Nisæan charger, whose accoutrements, as well as those of his rider, glittered with gold. So rode Charles of Burgundy at Granson or at Morat. In the present day such costume is scarcely to be seen further west than India, and some tall Rajah, full dressed for the Governor-General's durbar, would give a good idea of how Masistius looked at the head of his cuirassiers. These galloped up to the Greek infantry in troops, hurling their javelins, and calling them "women" because they did not come on. The Megarians were in the most exposed place. Being hard pressed, they sent to Pausanias for succour. When he called for volunteers, the Athenians promptly offered, and three hundred picked men, supported by archers, moved up. The charges continued without cessation, Masistius leading with the utmost gallantry, and presenting a conspicuous mark to the bowmen. At last an arrow pierced the side of his charger. He reared back from the agony of the wound, and threw his rider, who now lay at the mercy of his enemies, stunned by his fall, and, like the knights of the middle ages, helpless from the weight of his panoply. His vest of Tyrian crimson was pierced with spear-points, but

still he lived, for under it he wore a shirt of golden mail. At last a hand more dexterous than the rest pierced his brain through one of the eye-holes of his visor, for he was too proud to ask for quarter. Amongst his own followers, as they charged and wheeled about, no one knew that he was dead, and they might even have ridden over the body of their unconscious commander, as the Prussian cavalry did over Blucher when he lay under his dead horse at Ligny. But when they retired he was immediately missed, for there was no one to give the word of command. All that they could now do for him was to recover his body, and with this object the squadrons united and made a combined onset. To meet this, the Athenians called up other Greek troops to their assistance. While they were coming, a fierce struggle took place for the body, which the Athenians were obliged to leave till their reinforcements joined them. But as it could not be easily removed by cavalry, it ultimately remained in possession of the Greeks. Many Persian knights shared the fate of their commander, so that the rest of the troopers were obliged to ride back to Mardonius with the news of their misfortune. The death of Masistius was considered such a blow that it was bewailed by the whole army, corps after corps taking up the dole of their Adonis, till it resounded through all Bœotia, and horses and men were ordered to be shorn and shaven as a sign of public mourning; for Masistius, next to Mardonius, was considered the greatest man in the army. To the Greeks his fall was a matter of equal rejoicing, and the handsome corpse was carried along the lines to raise the spirits of the soldiers. Their fear of cavalry was now wearing off, and a general forward movement

was made towards the plain of Plataea, where water was more abundant. They took up a new position near the Gargaphian Fountain (the modern Vergantiani). Here a hot debate arose between the Tegeans and Athenians, each demanding the honour of occupying the left wing (the Spartans always claimed the right), which was decided, chiefly on mythological grounds, in favour of the Athenians. The army was thus marshalled: on the right were five thousand heavy-armed Spartans, with thirty-five thousand light-armed Helots, and of other Laconians five thousand; then the Tegeans, then the other Greek contingents, till on the extreme left six hundred Plataeans stood by the side of eight thousand Athenians under Aristides. The decision of Greek battles mainly rested on the heavy-armed infantry. Each man of these was generally attended by his military servant, and looked upon himself as an officer and a gentleman. The Athenian contingent probably represented all who were not engaged on board the fleet. The remnant of the Thespians—whose city as well as Plataea had been sacked—eighteen hundred in number, were also there, but now too much impoverished to serve as heavy-armed. The sum total of the army was one hundred and ten thousand men, being less than one to three to the army of the king.

Mardonius honoured the Spartans by confronting them with his best troops, the Persians; he posted his Medes, Bactrians, Indians, and Sacæ opposite the other Greeks, and threatened the Athenians with his Greek and Macedonian allies. Besides his three hundred thousand, he had a number of small contingents, such as marines from the fleet, and perhaps fifty thousand Greek auxiliaries. It was not the custom for

any army to engage until the omens had been pronounced favourable ; and the soothsayers on both sides constantly reported that they were favourable for defence, but not for attack. After the two armies had thus watched each other for eight days, Mardonius was advised to occupy the passes of Cithæron, as the Greeks were constantly being reinforced from that quarter, and accordingly despatched cavalry to a pass leading to Plataea, called "Three Heads" by the Boeotians, and "Oakheads" by the Athenians (the Greek words sounding much the same). This foray resulted in destroying a military train of five hundred sumpter animals, which was making its way to the Greek army. The two next days were passed in demonstrations of cavalry up to the Asopus, which ran between the armies, the Theban horse showing great alacrity in annoying their Hellenic brethren, but leaving the serious fighting to the Persians. On the eleventh day Mardonius, tired of inaction, held a council of war, the result of which was that he ordered an attack on the next day, in spite of the still unfavourable auspices.

In the dead of night, as the armies lay in position, the Athenian sentries were accosted by a solitary horseman who asked to speak to their commanders. When they came to the front, he told them that the omens had till now restrained Mardonius, but that yesterday he had "bid the omens farewell," and intended to fight on the morrow. He added, that he hoped that his present service would not be forgotten ; he was of Greek origin, and a secret friend of the Greeks : his name was Alexander, the son of Amyntas of Macedonia. As soon as the message had been reported to Pausanias, he, with a scarcely Spartan spirit,

wished the Athenians to change places with him, as, from their experience at Marathon, they knew the Persian manner of fighting better. And this manœuvre, dangerous as it was to attempt in the face of the enemy, would have been executed, had not Mardonius discovered it, and made a corresponding disposition of his own army. He then sent a herald to reproach the Spartans, and challenge them to fight man for man, with or without the rest of the combatants, as they pleased. As no answer was given, his cavalry were launched *en masse* against the Greek army. The mounted archers caused them great annoyance, and destroyed the Gargaphian well, from which their water supply was drawn. The supplies from the rear having been cut off, the Greeks determined on a westward movement towards the city of Platæa, where they would be within reach of water. Half the army were to carry out this movement in the night, while the other half were to fall back on Cithæron, to protect their line of communication with their base behind the isthmus. The first division had suffered so much during the day, that in their joy at the respite they retired too far, and never halted till they reached the precincts of a temple of Juno, close to Platæa itself. Pausanias himself was following, but he was kept back by the insubordination of a sturdy colonel named Amompharetus, who objected to any strategic movements which looked like running away. At length he was left to follow or not, as he pleased, while the rest of the Spartans defiled along the safe and hilly ground, the Athenians striking across the exposed plain. Mardonius had now some reason to despise his enemy, and he ordered all his cavalry to

charge, and the infantry to advance at quick march, crossing the Asopus. The Athenians were hidden from him by a series of knolls, but he pressed hard on the steps of the Lacedæmonians and Tegeans. Fortune sometimes favours the timid as well as the brave. Seeing Mardonius apparently pursuing the enemy, the rest of his army at once broke their ranks and followed in disorder, each man eager to be in at the death of the quarry which his commander was hunting down. Pausanias had already sent a mounted orderly to the Athenians to beg that they would come to his assistance, or at least send their archers, as he was sorely vexed by the cavalry. They could not comply, as they wanted all their strength to repulse a general attack which was just then being made on them by the king's Greeks. Pausanias halted his line; but still the sacrifices were unpropitious. From behind the Persian breastwork of shields came a rain of arrows, and the breastwork itself seemed impregnable. The Lacedæmonians and Tegeans were falling fast. At last Pausanias espied at no great distance the temple of Juno, and offered up a prayer to the goddess. The omens at once changed, as by magic. The Tegeans dashed at the enemy's fence of shields. The Spartans followed, and the battle was won. The Persians fought like bull-dogs, singly or in knots, though their long dress, says the chronicler, was terribly in the way. They wrenched away or snapt asunder the long Greek lances, and made play with their hangers. Mardonius, conspicuous on a white horse, like Ney at Waterloo, was the "bravest of the brave." But at last a cry rose that Mardonius was down, and at that cry the Persians wavered, and fled in wild

disorder to the great stockade which had been built to protect their camp. But Artabazus, who had now come up, had kept his forty thousand men in hand when he saw the scramble of the attack; and when he saw the repulse, he made no attempt to save the day, but faced about and at once began an orderly retreat on the Hellespont. Some of the Greeks who had joined the Persian king fought desperately in their miserable cause. Three hundred noble Thebans are said to have fallen in the front of the battle. This may have been the "Sacred Band" which fought under Epaminondas in later history, and which consisted of friends sworn to live and die together. These Thebans fought indeed "with halters round their necks:" for after the victory, Pausanias insisted on the surrender of the chiefs of the late movement, and executed them all. When the Greeks who had made the mistake of retreating too far turned back in disorder to get their share of the glory, poetical justice overtook them in the shape of a charge of the Persian and Theban cavalry, which stung them with the energy of a doomed swarm of wasps. They lost six hundred men, and were scattered to the heights of Cithæron. All was not yet over. A new battle began at the Persian camp, which vigorously repelled the onslaughts of the Spartans and their allies. It was not till the Athenians came up (who understood "wall-fighting," says Herodotus) that the day could be spoken of as finally decided. They managed to break or upset the "abattis," and the Tegeans again led the forlorn hope through it or over it. Then began the slaughter. Only three thousand were left alive of the whole Persian army. This seems incredible,

especially in connection with the small number of the allies who fell in the action, as given by Herodotus. But the vanquished were possibly impounded in their fortified camp, like the wretched Mamelukes whom Mehemet Ali destroyed in the court of a fortress.

The plunder was immense. The tent of Mardonius, with all the royal plate which the king had left him, his manger of bronze, gold and silver in all shapes, splendidly inlaid arms, vestments, horses, camels, beautiful women, became the dangerous prize of the needy Peloponnesians, who, to avert Nemesis, offered a tithe of all to the gods. Pausanias buried with due honours the body of the brave Mardonius, though he was strongly urged by an Æginetan of high rank to remember how that of Leonidas had been treated by Xerxes. "Would you have me humble my country in the dust, now that I have just raised her?" was the Spartan's answer. And he bid the proposer be thankful that he answered him only in words.

It seems to have been the invidious custom in all Greek battles to assign to one or two men the prize of valour, and our author always gives their names. The bravest of all was adjudged to be the Spartan Aristodemus, sole survivor of the glorious three hundred of Thermopylæ. He could not bear his life, and now lost it purposely; therefore he was refused the usual honours. Sophanes was proclaimed the bravest of the Athenians: he was in fact so brave that (perhaps adopting an idea from his experience afloat) he wore an anchor and chain, by which he moored himself to his post in action.* It is

* So the wounded at the battle of Clontarf, in Ireland, are said to have got themselves tied to stakes.

a pity to lose our faith in so quaint an expedient ; but there was another version of the story, says our honest chronicler, that he bore an anchor as the device on his shield. The prudent Artabazus reached Byzantium safely, though he was roughly handled on the road by the Thracians and Macedonians, the latter of whom had been from the first favourable to the Greeks.

This "crowning mercy" of Plataea, as Cromwell would have called it, was supplemented by a brilliant action which took place on the same day at Mycale, on the coast of Ionia.

When the season for navigation had come, the Greek fleet under Leotychides, which had remained at Delos, pushed across to Samos, but the prey they had expected to find there had flown. The Persian fleet had placed itself under the protection of a land force of sixty thousand men under Tigranes, appointed by Xerxes governor of Ionia, and was drawn up on shore at Mycale, protected by a rampart and palisade. The Greeks came provided with gangway boards, and all other appliances for naval action. But the Persians were morally sea-sick, therefore Leotychides disembarked his troops at his leisure. A mysterious rumour of a great victory in Bœotia, ascribed to some divine messenger, but possibly brought as a telegram by fire-signals, put the Greeks in heart. It was afternoon, and the field of Plataea had been fought in the morning. The Athenians were already engaged, when the Lacedæmonians came up, having to make a circuit by a rugged way intersected with ravines. As at Plataea, the Persians fought well as long as their rampart of bucklers stood upright : even when it gave way, they broke up into clusters, which fought like wild boars at bay.

The onset of the Athenians was the more furious that they feared to have their laurels snatched from them by their friends. They drove the Persians into their camp, and, more fortunate than their brethren at Plataea, entered it pell-mell with the flying enemy. The barbarian auxiliaries fled where they could, but the Persians themselves still held out desperately, until the Lacedæmonians came up and completed the defeat. Tigranes and Mardontes died as became Persian officers, fighting gallantly to the last. The Milesians in the Persian service, who had been posted to guard the passes of the mountain, turned on the fugitives and cut them up; for revolt became general among the Ionian Greeks as soon as the battle was over, and Samos, Chios, Lesbos, and other islands, joined the confederacy for reprisals against Persia.

The Greek fleet now sailed to the Hellespont, where they found the bridge of boats destroyed. Then Leotychides went home with his Spartans, but the Athenians stayed and besieged Sestos, which held out till the autumn, when it was taken by famine. There had been a serious debate whether it would not be better to remove the Ionian colonists altogether, and settle them in Greece, than leave them to the future tender mercies of Persia. But the question was settled by the Athenians taking their Asiatic colonies into close league and alliance.

In those two memorable years, which end the narrative of Herodotus, Europe had established its preponderance over Asia for ever. The last tableau of his great epic drama is almost lost in its blaze of glory, and it is time that the curtain should fall. It is true that Herodotus hardly recognises

this, and tries to amuse his readers for some time longer with the not very edifying court-scandal of Susa. Xerxes had infinite trouble with the ladies of his court. The fierce and jealous sultana Amestris, who treated her rival with such fiendish cruelty, may be the Vashti of the Book of Esther, as Ahasuerus is supposed to be the Scriptural form of her husband's name. Nemesis was fully satisfied when Xerxes himself fell a victim to a palace intrigue; but this is not mentioned by Herodotus, nor that a statue of that dread Power was placed on the spot where he had been a spectator of the destruction of his fleet.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

It has thus been attempted to give, in a succinct form, the general drift and character of the great work of Herodotus. In the original, his liquid and pellucid Ionian dialect constitutes one of the greatest charms of his style. In simple perspicuity he forms a remarkable contrast to the terse and gnarled Thucydides, who propounds so many puzzles to the classical scholar. But no ancient author is so profitable to read in a good translation. A good translation is like a good photograph, giving distinctive traits, and light and shade, but no life or colour. Our attempt is a coloured sketch on a small scale, and not a photograph, of a great book.

Herodotus may be considered, according to the standard of his time, as a decidedly veracious historian. And his veracity is of the kind that wears well. It is impossible to refuse to credit him with general impartiality; and if he erred at all, the modern reader will readily pardon his excessive sympathy with the Athenians. Yet he does full justice to the gallantry, generosity, and other high qualities of the Persians. He was born, we must remember, a Persian subject,—for Halicarnassus did not recover its independence until

he had grown up to manhood—and he could speak from experience of the masters of Ionia, that their rule was, on the whole, just and equal. His own town, indeed, had met with exceptional kindness from her liege lords. Hence he has none of the usual Greek contempt of and antipathy to “barbarians,” or people speaking an unknown tongue, which is a *primâ facie* reason for dislike with the vulgar of all nations. His great merit is that of Homer and Shakespeare, a broad catholicity of sentiment in observing and estimating character. He has the strongest sympathy with heroism whenever displayed, an exquisite feeling for humorous situations, and, as naturally connected with humour, intense pathos when the subject admits of it. He has the head of a sage, the heart of a mother, and the simple apprehension of a child. And if his style is redundant with a sort of Biblical reiteration, it is always clear and luminous. There can never be any mistake about his meaning, as long as no corruption has crept into his text, which, when it happens, is the fault of his transcribers, and not his own. His ethical portraits are above all invaluable, and, however fabulous the circumstances with which they are connected, must have been true to the life, from their evidently undesigned consistency. The benignant and vain Croesus, the ambitious Cyrus, the truculent Cambyses, the chivalrous yet calculating Darius, the wild Cleomenes, the wise and wary Themistocles, the frantic Xerxes—the very type of the infatuation by which the divine vengeance wrought—these, and a host of other portraits of living men, can only be compared in their verisimilitude with the immortal creations of Shakespeare.

Not a few pleasant anecdotes—mythical, ethical,

social, and historical—as well as nearly all the minor affluents of the main stream of narrative, have been passed over or barely glanced at, for want of space. Some indelicacies have been softened in stories too good to omit, but this process leaves their spirit unchanged. For our author is always antique and always natural. When he errs against refinement, it is in a sort of infantine naughtiness—not with the perverse intention of a modern writer. Indeed, his high moral principle cannot fail to strike even a careless reader. His blood plainly boils at injustice or cruelty ; and whatever superstition he may have inherited with his religious creed, he has an intense faith in an overruling Providence, which, spite of some anomalies which puzzle him, as they have done the wisest in all ages, does on the whole ordain that “the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth—much more the wicked and the sinner.”

END OF HERODOTUS.

Ancient Classics for English Readers

EDITED BY THE

REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

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BY

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CÆSAR.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

IT may perhaps be fairly said that the Commentaries of Cæsar are the beginning of modern history. He wrote, indeed, nearly two thousand years ago; but he wrote, not of times then long past, but of things which were done under his own eyes, and of his own deeds. And he wrote of countries with which we are familiar,—of our Britain, for instance, which he twice invaded, of peoples not so far remote but that we can identify them with our neighbours and ourselves; and he so wrote as to make us feel that we are reading actual history, and not romance. The simplicity of the narratives which he has left is their chief characteristic, if not their greatest charm. We feel sure that the circumstances which he tells us did occur, and that they occurred very nearly as he tells them. He deals with those great movements in Europe from which have

sprung, and to which we can trace, the present political condition of the nations. Interested as the scholar, or the reader of general literature, may be in the great deeds of the heroes of Greece, and in the burning words of Greek orators, it is almost impossible for him to connect by any intimate and thoroughly-trusted link the fortunes of Athens, or Sparta, or Macedonia, with our own times and our own position. It is almost equally difficult to do so in regard to the events of Rome and the Roman power before the time of Cæsar. We cannot realise and bring home to ourselves the Punic Wars or the Social War, the Scipios and the Gracchi, or even the contest for power between Marius and Sulla, as we do the Gallic Wars and the invasion of Britain, by which the civilisation of Rome was first carried westwards, or the great civil wars,—the “*Bellum Civile*,”—by which was commenced a line of emperors continued almost down to our own days, and to which in some degree may be traced the origin and formation of almost every existing European nation. It is no doubt true that if we did but know the facts correctly, we could refer back every political and social condition of the present day to the remotest period of man’s existence; but the interest fails us when the facts become doubtful, and when the mind begins to fear that history is mixed with romance. Herodotus is so mythic that what delight we have in his writings comes in a very slight degree from any desire on our part to form a continuous chain from the days of which he wrote down to our own. Between the marvels of Herodotus and the facts of Cæsar there is a great interval,

from which have come down to us the works of various noble historians ; but with Cæsar it seems that that certainty commences which we would wish to regard as the distinguishing characteristic of modern history.

It must be remembered from the beginning that Cæsar wrote only of what he did or of what he caused to be done himself. At least he only so wrote in the two works of his which remain to us. We are told that he produced much besides his Commentaries,—among other works, a poem,—but the two Commentaries are all of his that we have. The former, in seven books, relates the facts of his seven first campaigns in Gaul for seven consecutive years ; those campaigns in which he reduced the nations living between the Rhine, the Rhone, the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees, and the sea which we now call the British Channel.* The latter Commentary relates the circumstances of the civil war in which he contended for power against Pompey, his former colleague, with Crassus, in the first triumvirate, and established that empire to which Augustus succeeded after a second short-lived triumvirate between himself and Lepidus and Antony.

It is the object of this little volume to describe Cæsar's Commentaries for the aid of those who do not read Latin, and not to write Roman history ; but it may be well to say something, in a few introductory lines, of the life and character of our author. We are all more or less familiar with the name of Julius Cæsar. In our early days we learned that he

* There is an eighth book, referring to an eighth and ninth campaign, but it is not the work of Cæsar.

was the first of those twelve Roman emperors with whose names it was thought right to burden our young memories ; and we were taught to understand that when he began to reign there ceased to exist that form of republican government in which two consuls elected annually did in truth preside over the fortunes of the empire. There had first been seven kings,—whose names have also been made familiar to us,—then the consuls, and after them the twelve Cæsars, of whom the great Julius was the first. So much we all know of him ; and we know, too, that he was killed in the Capitol by conspirators just as he was going to become emperor, although this latter scrap of knowledge seems to be paradoxically at variance with the former. In addition to this we know that he was a great commander and conqueror and writer, who did things and wrote of them in the “*veni, vidi, vici*” style—saying of himself, “*I came, I saw, I conquered.*” We know that a great Roman army was intrusted to him, and that he used this army for the purpose of establishing his own power in Rome by taking a portion of it over the Rubicon, which little river separated the province which he had been appointed to govern from the actual Roman territory within which, as a military servant of the magistrates of the republic, he had no business to appear as a general & the head of his army. So much we know ; and in the following very short memoir of the great commander and historian, no effort shall be made,—as has been so frequently and so painfully done for us in late years,—to upset the teachings of our youth, and to

prove that the old lessons were wrong. They were all fairly accurate, and shall now only be supplemented by a few further circumstances which were doubtless once learned by all school-boys and school-girls, but which some may perhaps have forgotten since those happy days.

Dean Merivale, in one of the early chapters of his admirable history of the Romans under the Empire, declares that Caius Julius Cæsar is the greatest name in history. He makes the claim without reserve, and attaches to it no restriction, or suggestion that such is simply his own opinion. Claims of this nature, made by writers on behalf of their pet-heroes, we are, all of us, generally inclined to dispute; but this claim, great as it is, can hardly be disputed. Dr Merivale does not say that Cæsar was the greatest man that ever lived. In measuring such supremacy, men take for themselves various standards. To satisfy the judgment of one, it is necessary that a poet should be selected; for another, a teacher of religion; for a third, some intellectual hero who has assisted in discovering the secrets of nature by the operations of his own brain; for a fourth, a ruler,—and so on. But the names of some of these cannot be said to be great in history. Homer, Luther, Galileo, and Charles V., are great names,—as are also Shakespeare, Knox, Queen Elizabeth, and Newton. Among these, the two rulers would probably be the least in general admiration. But no one can assert that the names of the poets, divines, and philosophers, are greater than theirs in history. The Dean means that of all men who have lived, and whose deeds are known

to us, Julius Cæsar did most to move the world; and we think that the Dean is right. Those whom we might, perhaps, compare with Cæsar, are Alexander, Charlemagne, Cromwell, Napoleon, and Washington. In regard to the first two, we feel, when claims are made for them, that they are grounded on the performance of deeds only partially known to us. In the days of Alexander, history was still dark,—and it had become dark again in those of Charlemagne. What Cromwell did was confined to our own islands, and, though he was great for us, he does not loom as large before the eyes of mankind in general as does one who moved all Europe, present and future. If there be any fair antagonist to Cæsar in this claim, it is Napoleon. As a soldier he was equally great, and the area of his operations was as extended. But there is an old saying which tells us that no one can be sure of his fortune till the end shall have come; and Cæsar's death on the steps of the Capitol was more in accordance with our ideas of greatness than that of Napoleon at St Helena. We cannot, moreover, but feel that there were fewer drawbacks from greatness in the personal demeanour of the Roman "Imperator" and Dictator than in that of the French Emperor. For Julius Cæsar was never really emperor, in that sense in which we use the word, and in accordance with which his successor Augustus really became an emperor. As to Washington, we may perhaps allow that in moral attributes he was the greatest of all. To aid his country he dared all,—even a rebel's disgraceful death. **had** he not succeeded where success was most improba

ble; and in all that he attempted he succeeded. His is the name that culminates among those of the men who made the United States a nation, and does so by the eager consent of all its people. And his work came altogether from patriotism,—with no alloy of personal ambition. But it cannot be said that the things he did were great as those which were done by Cæsar, or that he himself was as potent in the doing of them. He ventured everything with as grand a purpose as ever warmed the heart of man, and he was successful; but the things which he did were in themselves small in comparison with those effected by his less noble rival for fame. Mommsen, the German historian, describes Cæsar as a man too great for the scope of his intelligence and power of delineation. “The historian,” he says, speaking of Cæsar, “when once in a thousand years he encounters the perfect, can only be silent regarding it.” Napoleon also, in his life of Cæsar, paints his hero as perfect; but Napoleon when doing so is, in fact, claiming godlike perfection for that second Cæsar, his uncle. And the perfection which he claims is not that of which Mommsen speaks. The German intends to convey to us his conviction that Cæsar was perfect in human capacity and intelligence. Napoleon claims for him moral perfection. “We may be convinced,” says the Emperor, “by the above facts, that during his first consulate, one only motive animated Cæsar,—namely, the public interest.” We cannot, however, quite take the facts as the Emperor of the French gives them to us, nor can we share his conviction; but the common consent

of reading men will probably acknowledge that there is in history no name so great as that of Julius Cæsar,—of whose written works some account is intended to be given in the following chapters.

He was born just one hundred years before Christ, and came of an old noble Roman family, of which Julius and not Cæsar was the distinctive name. Whence came the name of Cæsar has been a matter of doubt and of legend. Some say that it arose from the thick hair of one of the Julian tribe; others that a certain scion of the family, like Macduff, “was from his mother’s womb untimely ripped,” for which derivations Latin words are found to be opportune. Again we are told that one of the family once kept an elephant,—and we are referred to some eastern language in which the word for elephant has a sound like Cæsar. Another legend also rose from Cæsar’s name, which, in the Gallic language of those days,—very luckily for Cæsar,—sounded as though one should say, “Send him back.” Cæsar’s horse once ran away with him, and carried him over to the enemy. An insolent Gaul, who knew him, called out, “Cæsar, Cæsar!” and so the other Gauls, obeying the order supposed to be given, allowed the illustrious one to escape. It must be acknowledged, however, that the learned German who tells us this story expresses a contemptuous conviction that it cannot be true. Whatever may have produced the word, its significance, derived from the doings and writings of Caius Julius, has been very great. It has come to mean in various languages the holder of despotic power; and though it is said that, as a fact, the Russian title

Czar has no connection with the Roman word, so great is the prestige of the name, that in the minds of men the popular appellation of the Russian Emperor will always be connected with that of the line of the Roman Emperor.

Cæsar was the nephew by marriage of that Marius who, with alternations of bloody successes and seemingly irreparable ruin, had carried on a contest with Sulla for supreme power in the republic. Sulla in these struggles had represented the aristocrats and patricians,—what we perhaps may call the Conservative interest; while Marius, whose origin was low, who had been a common soldier, and, rising from the ranks, had become the darling of the army and of the people, may perhaps be regarded as one who would have called himself a Liberal, had any such term been known in those days. His liberality,—as has been the case with other political leaders since his time,—led him to personal power. He was seven times Consul, having secured his seventh election by atrocious barbarities and butcherings of his enemies in the city; and during this last consulship he died. The young Cæsar, though a patrician by birth, succeeded his uncle in the popular party, and seems from a very early age,—from his very boyhood,—to have looked forward to the power which he might win by playing his cards with discretion.

And very discreet he was,—self-confident to a wonderful degree, and patient also. It is to be presumed that most of our readers know how the Roman Republic fell, and the Roman Empire became established as the result of the civil wars which began with Marius

and ended with that “young Octavius” whom we better recognise as Augustus Cæsar. Julius Cæsar was the nephew by marriage of Marius, and Augustus was the great-nephew and heir of Julius. By means of conscriptions and murders, worse in their nature, though less probably in number, than those which disgraced the French Revolution, the power which Marius achieved almost without foresight, for which the great Cæsar strove from his youth upwards with constant foresight, was confirmed in the hands of Augustus, and bequeathed by him to the emperors. In looking back at the annals of the world, we shall generally find that despotic power has first grown out of popular movement against authority. It was so with our own Cromwell, has twice been so in the history of modern France, and certainly was so in the formation of the Roman Empire. In the great work of establishing that empire, it was the mind and hand and courage of Cæsar that brought about the result, whether it was for good or evil. And in looking at the lives of the three men—Marius, Cæsar, and Augustus, who followed each other, and all worked to the same end, the destruction of that oligarchy which was called a Republic in Rome—we find that the one was a man, while the others were beasts of prey. The cruelties of Marius as an old man, and of Augustus as a young one, were so astounding as, even at this distance, to horrify the reader, though he remembers that Christianity had not yet softened men’s hearts. Marius, the old man, almost swam in the blood of his enemies, as also did his rival Sulla; but the young Octavius, he whom the gods favoured so

long as the almost divine* Augustus, cemented his throne with the blood of his friends. To complete the satisfaction of Lepidus and Antony, his comrades in the second triumvirate, he did not scruple to add to the list of those who were to die, the names of the nearest and dearest to him. Between these monsters of cruelty—between Marius and Sulla, who went before him, and Octavius and Antony who followed him—Cæsar has become famous for clemency. And yet the hair of the reader almost stands on end with horror as Cæsar recounts in page after page the stories of cities burned to the ground, and whole communities slaughtered in cold blood. Of the destruction of the women and children of an entire tribe, Cæsar will leave the unimpassioned record in one line. But this at least may be said of Cæsar, that he took no delight in slaughter. When it became in his sight expedient that a people should suffer, so that others might learn to yield and to obey, he could give the order apparently without an effort. And we hear of no regrets, or of any remorse which followed the execution of it. But bloodshed in itself was not sweet to him. He was a discreet, far-seeing man, and could do without a scruple what discretion and caution demanded of him.

And it may be said of Cæsar that he was in some sort guided in his life by sense of duty and love of country; as it may also be said of his great contemporaries, Pompey and Cicero. With those who went

* *Cœlo tonantem credidimus Jovem
Regnare ; præsens Divus habebitur
Augustus.*

before him, Marius and Sulla, as also with those who followed him, Antony and Augustus, it does not seem that any such motives actuated them. Love of power and greed, hatred of their enemies and personal ambition, a feeling that they were urged on by their fates to seek for high place, and a resolve that it was better to kill than be killed, impelled them to their courses. These feelings were strong, too, with Cæsar, as they are strong to this day with statesmen and with generals; but mingled with them in Cæsar's breast there was a noble idea, that he would be true to the greatness of Rome, and that he would grasp at power in order that the Roman Empire might be well governed. Augustus, doubtless, ruled well; and to Julius Cæsar very little scope for ruling was allowed after his battling was done; but to Augustus no higher praise can be assigned than that he had the intelligence to see that the temporary wellbeing of the citizens of Rome was the best guarantee for his own security.

Early in life Cæsar lifted himself to high position, though he did so in the midst of dangers. It was the wonder of those around him that Sulla did not murder him when he was young,—crush him while he was yet, as it were, in his shell; but Sulla spared him, and he rose apace. We are told that he became priest of Jupiter at seventeen, and he was then already a married man. He early trained himself as a public orator, and amidst every danger espoused the popular cause in Rome. **H**e served his country in the East,—in Bithynia, probably,—escaping, by doing so, the perils of a residence in the city. He became Quæstor and then

Ædile, assisted by all the Marian party, as that party would assist the rising man whom they regarded as their future leader. He attacked and was attacked, and was "indefatigable in harassing the aristocracy,"* who strove, but strove in vain, to crush him. Though young, and addicted to all the pleasures of youth,—a trifler, as Sulla once called him,—he omitted to learn nothing that was necessary for him to know as a chief of a great party and a leader of great armies. When he was thirty-seven he was made Pontifex Maximus, the official chief of the priesthood of Rome, the office greatest in honour of any in the city, although opposed by the whole weight of the aristocracy, and although Catulus was a candidate, who, of all that party, was the highest not only in renown but in virtue. He became Prætor the next year, though again he was opposed by all the influence of those who feared him. And, after his twelve months of office, he assumed the government of Spain,—the province allotted to him as Proprætor, in accordance with the usage of the Republic,—in the teeth of a decree of the Senate ordering him to remain in Rome. Here he gained his first great military success, first made himself known to his soldiery, and came back to Rome entitled to the honour of a triumph.

But there was still another step on the ladder of the State before he could assume the position which no doubt he already saw before him. He must be Consul before he could be the master of many legions, and in

* The words are taken from Dean Merivale's history.

order that he might sue in proper form for the consulship, it was necessary that he should abandon his Triumph. He could only triumph as holding the office of General of the Republic's forces, and as General or Imperator he could not enter the city. He abandoned the Triumph, sued for his office in the common fashion, and enabled the citizens to say that he preferred their service to his personal honours. At the age of forty-one he became Consul. It was during the struggle for the consulship that the triumvirate was formed, of which subsequent ages have heard so much, and of which Romans at the time heard probably so little. Pompey, who had been the political child of Sulla, and had been the hope of the patricians to whom he belonged, had returned to Rome after various victories which he had achieved as Proconsul in the East, had triumphed, —and had ventured to recline on his honours, disbanding his army and taking to himself the credit of subsiding into privacy. The times were too rough for such honest duty, and Pompey found himself for a while slighted by his party. Though he had thought himself able to abandon power, he could not bear the loss of it. It may be that he had conceived himself able to rule the city by his influence without the aid of his legions. Cæsar tempted him, and they two with Crassus, who was wanted for his wealth, formed the first triumvirate. By such pact among themselves they were to rule all Rome and all Rome's provinces; but doubtless, by resolves within himself of which no one knew, Cæsar intended even then to grasp the dominion of the whole in his own hands. During the

years that followed,—the years in which Cæsar was engaged in his Gallic wars,—Pompey remained at Rome, not indeed as Cæsar's friend—for that hollow friendship was brought to an end by the death of Julia, Cæsar's daughter, whom Pompey, though five years Cæsar's elder, had married—but in undecided rivalry to the active man who in foreign wars was preparing legions by which to win the Empire. Afterwards, when Cæsar, as we shall hear, had crossed the Rubicon, their enmity was declared. It was natural that they should be enemies. In middle life, Pompey, as we have seen, had married Cæsar's daughter, and Cæsar's second wife had been a Pompeia.* But when they were young, and each was anxious to attach himself to the politics of his own party, Pompey had married the daughter-in-law of Sulla, and Cæsar had married the daughter of Cinna, who had almost been joined with

* She was that wife who was false with Clodius, and whom Cæsar divorced, declaring that Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected. He would not keep the false wife; neither would he at that moment take part in the accusation against Clodius, who was of his party, and against whom such accusation backed by Cæsar would have been fatal. The intrusion of the demagogue into Cæsar's house in the pursuit of Cæsar's wife during the mysteries of the Bona Dea became the subject of a trial in Rome. The offence was terrible and was notorious. Clodius, who was hated and feared by the patricians, was a favourite with the popular party. The offender was at last brought to trial, and was acquitted by venal judges. A word spoken by the injured husband would have insured his condemnation, but that word Cæsar would not speak. His wife he could divorce, but he would not jeopardise his power with his own party by demanding the punishment of him who had debauched her.

Marius in leading the popular party. Such having been the connection they had made in their early lives, it was natural that Pompey and Cæsar should be enemies, and that the union of those two with any other third in a triumvirate should be but a hollow compromise, planned and carried out only that time might be gained.

Cæsar was now Consul, and from his consular chair laughed to scorn the Senate and the aristocratic colleague with whom he was joined,—Bibulus, of whom we shall again hear in the Commentary on the civil war. During his year of office he seems to have ruled almost supreme and almost alone. The Senate was forced to do his bidding, and Pompey, at any rate for this year, was his ally. We already know that to prætors and to consuls, after their year of office in the city, were confided the government of the great provinces of the Republic, and that these officers while so governing were called *proprætors* and *proconsuls*. After his prætorship Cæsar had gone for a year to southern Spain, the province which had been assigned to him, whence he came back triumphant,—but not to enjoy his Triumph. At the expiration of his consulship the joint provinces of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum were assigned to him, not for one year, but for five years; and to these was added Transalpine Gaul, by which grant dominion was given to him over all that country which we now know as Northern Italy, over Illyria to the east, and to the west across the Alps, over the Roman province already established in the south of France. This province, bounded on the north by Lake Lemman and the Swiss mountains, ran

south to the Mediterranean, and to the west half across the great neck of land which joins Spain to the continent of Europe. This province of Transalpine Gaul was already Roman, and to Cæsar was intrusted the task of defending this, and of defending Rome itself, from the terrible valour of the Gauls. That he might do this it was necessary that he should collect his legions in that other Gaul which we now know as the north of Italy.

It does not seem that there was any preconceived idea that Cæsar should reduce all Gallia beneath the Roman yoke. Hitherto Rome had feared the Gauls, and had been subject to their inroads. The Gauls in former years had even made their way as invaders into the very city, and had been bought out with a ransom. They had spread themselves over Northern Italy, and hence, when Northern Italy was conquered by Roman arms, it became a province under the name of Cisalpine Gaul. Then, during the hundred years which preceded Cæsar's wars, a province was gradually founded and extended in the south of France, of which Marseilles was the kernel. Massilia had been a colony of Greek merchants, and was supported by the alliance of Rome. Whither such alliance leads is known to all readers of history. The Greek colony became a Roman town, and the Roman province stretched itself around the town. It was Cæsar's duty, as governor of Transalpine Gaul, to see that the poor province was not hurt by those ravaging Gauls. How he performed that duty he tells us in his first Commentary.

During the fourth year of his office, while Pompey

and Crassus, his colleagues in the then existing triumvirate, were consuls, his term of dominion over the three provinces was prolonged by the addition of five other years. But he did not see the end of the ten years in that scene of action. Julia, his daughter, had died, and his great rival was estranged from him. The Senate had clamoured for his recall, and Pompey, with doubtful words, had assented. A portion of his army was demanded from him, was sent by him into Italy in obedience to the Senate, and shortly afterwards was placed under the command of Pompey. Then Cæsar found that the Italian side of the Alps was the more convenient for his purposes, that the Hither or Cisalpine Gaul demanded his services, and that it would be well for him to be near the Rubicon. The second Commentary, in three books, '*De Bello Civili*,' giving us his record of the civil war, tells us of his deeds and fortunes for the next two years,—the years B.C. 49 and 48. The continuation of his career as a general is related in three other Commentaries, not by his own hand, to which, as being beyond the scope of this volume, only short allusion will be made. Then came one year of power, full of glory, and, upon the whole, well used; and after that there came the end, of which the tale has been so often told, when he fell, stabbed by friend and foe, at the foot of Pompey's pillar in the Capitol.

It is only further necessary that a few words should be added as to the character of Cæsar's writings,—for it is of his writings rather than of his career that it is **intended** here to give some idea to those who have not

an opportunity of reading them. Cæsar's story can hardly be told in this little volume, for it is the history of the world as the world then was. The word which our author has chosen as a name for his work,—and which now has become so well known as connected with Cæsar, that he who uses it seems to speak of Cæsar,—means, in Cæsar's sense, a Memoir. Were it not for Cæsar, a “Commentary” would be taken to signify that which the critic had added, rather than the work which the author had first produced. Cæsar's “Commentaries” are memoirs written by himself, descriptive of his different campaigns, in which he treats of himself in the third person, and tells his story as it might have been told by some accompanying scribe or secretary. This being so, we are of course driven to inquire whether some accompanying scribe or secretary may not in truth have done the work. And there is doubtless one great argument which must be powerful with us all towards the adoption of such a surmise. The amount of work which Cæsar had on hand, not only in regard to his campaigns, but in the conduct of his political career, was so great as to have overtasked any brain without the addition of literary labour. Surely no man was ever so worked; for the doctrine of the division of labour did not prevail then in great affairs as it does now. Cæsar was not only a general; he was also an engineer, an astronomer, an orator, a poet, a high priest—to whom, as such, though himself, as we are told, a disbeliever in the gods of Olympus, the intricate and complicated system of Roman worship was a necessary knowledge. And he was a politician, of whom it may be said that, though

he was intimately acquainted with the ferocity of opposition, he knew nothing of its comparative leisure. We have had busy statesmen writing books, two prime ministers translating Homer, another writing novels, a fourth known as a historian, a dramatist, and a biographer. But they did not lead armies as well as the Houses of Parliament, and they were occasionally blessed by the opportunities of comparative political retirement which opposition affords. From the beginning of the Gallic war, Cæsar was fighting in person every year but one till he died. It was only by personal fighting that he could obtain success. The reader of the following pages will find that, with the solitary exception of the siege of Marseilles, nothing great was done for him in his absence. And he had to make his army as well as to lead it. Legion by legion, he had to collect it as he needed it, and to collect it by the force of his own character and of his own name. The abnormal plunder with which it was necessary that his soldiers should be allured to abnormal valour and toil had to be given as though from his own hand. For every detail of the soldiers' work he was responsible; and at the same time it was incumbent on him so to manipulate his Roman enemies at Rome,—and, harder still than that, his Roman friends,—that confusion and destruction should not fall upon him as a politician. Thus weighted, could he write his own Commentaries? There is reason to believe that there was collected by him, no doubt with the aid of his secretaries, a large body of notes which were known as the Ephemerides of Cæsar,—jottings down, as we may say, taken from day to day. Were

not the Commentaries which bear Cæsar's name composed from these notes by some learned and cunning secretary?

These notes have been the cause of much scholastic wrath to some of the editors and critics. One learned German, hotly arguing that Cæsar wrote no Ephemerides, does allow that somebody must have written down the measurements of the journeys, of the mountains, and of the rivers, the numbers also of the captives and of the slaves.* “Not even I,” says he,—“not even do I believe that Cæsar was able to keep all these things simply in his memory.” Then he goes on to assert that to the keeping of such notes any scribe was equal; and that it was improbable that Cæsar could have found time for the keeping of notes when absolutely in his tent. The indignation and enthusiasm are comic, but the reasoning seems to be good. The notes were probably collected under Cæsar's immediate eyes by his secretaries; but there is ample evidence that the Commentaries themselves are Cæsar's own work. They seem to have become known at once to the learned Romans of the day; and Cicero, who was probably the most learned, and certainly the best critic of the time, speaks of them without any doubt as to their authorship. It was at once known that the first seven books of the Gallic War were written by Cæsar, and that the eighth was not. This seems to be conclusive. But in addition to this, there is internal evidence. Cæsar writes in the third person, and is very careful to maintain that mode of

* Nipperdeius.

expression. But he is not so careful but that on three or four occasions he forgets himself, and speaks in the first person. No other writer, writing for Cæsar, would have done so. And there are certain trifles in the mode of telling the story, which must have been personal to the man. He writes of "young" Crassus, and "young" Brutus, as no scribe would have written; and he shows, first his own pride in obtaining a legion from Pompey's friendship, and then his unmeasured disgust when the Senate demand and obtain from him that legion and another one, and when Pompey uses them against himself, in a fashion which would go far to prove the authenticity of each Commentary, were any proof needed. But the assent of Cæsar's contemporaries suffices for this without other evidence.

And it seems that they were written as the wars were carried on, and that each was published at once. Had it not been so, we could not understand that Cæsar should have begun the second Commentary before he had finished the first. It seems that he was hindered by the urgency of the Civil War from writing what with him would have been the two last books of the Gallic War, and therefore put the completion of that work into the hands of his friend Hirtius, who wrote the memoir of the two years in one book. And Cæsar's mode of speaking of men who were at one time his friends and then his enemies, shows that his first Commentary was completed and out of hand before the other was written. Labienus, who in the Gallic War was Cæsar's most trusted lieutenant, went over to the other side and served under Pompey in the Civil War. He could not have failed

to allude in some way to the desertion of Labienus, in the first Commentary, had Labienus left him and joined Pompey while the first Commentary was still in his hands.

His style was at once recognised by the great literary critic of the day as being excellent for its intended purpose. Cæsar is manifestly not ambitious of literary distinction, but is very anxious to convey to his readers a narrative of his own doings, which shall be graphic, succinct, intelligible, and sufficiently well expressed to insure the attention of readers. Cicero, the great critic, thus speaks of the Commentaries ; “*Valde quidam, inquam, probandos ; nudi enim sunt, recti, et venusti, omni ornatu orationis, tanquam veste, detracto.*” The passage is easily understood, but not perhaps very easily translated into English. “I pronounce them, indeed, to be very commendable, for they are simple, straightforward, agreeable, with all rhetorical ornament stripped from them, as a garment is stripped.” This was written by Cicero while Cæsar was yet living, as the context shows. And Cicero does not mean to imply that Cæsar’s writings are bald or uncouth : the word “*venusti*” is evidence of this. And again, speaking of Cæsar’s language, Cicero says that Cæsar spoke with more finished choice of words than almost any other orator of the day. And if he so spoke, he certainly so wrote, for the great speeches of the Romans were all written compositions. Montaigne says of Cæsar : “I read this author with somewhat more reverence and respect than is usually allowed to human writings, one while considering him in his person, by his actions and miracu-

lous greatness, and another in the purity and inimitable polish of his language and style, wherein he not only excels all other historians, as Cicero confesses, but per-adventure even Cicero himself." Cicero, however, confesses nothing of the kind, and Montaigne is so far wrong. Cæsar was a great favourite with Montaigne, who always speaks of his hero with glowing enthusiasm.

To us who love to make our language clear by the number of words used, and who in writing rarely give ourselves time for condensation, the closely-packed style of Cæsar is at first somewhat difficult of comprehension. It cannot be read otherwise than slowly till the reader's mind is trained by practice to Cæsarean expressions, and then not with rapidity. Three or four adjectives, or more probably participles, joined to substantives in a sentence, are continually intended to convey an amount of information for which, with us, three or four other distinct sentences would be used. It is almost impossible to give the meaning of Cæsar in English without using thrice as many words as he uses. The same may be said of many Latin writers,—perhaps of all; so great was the Roman tendency to condensation, and so great is ours to dilution. But with Cæsar, though every word means much, there are often many words in the same sentence, and the reader is soon compelled to acknowledge that skipping is out of the question, and that quick reading is undesirable.

That which will most strike the ordinary English reader in the narrative of Cæsar is the cruelty of the **Romans**,—cruelty of which Cæsar himself is guilty to

a frightful extent, and of which he never expresses horror. And yet among his contemporaries he achieved a character for clemency which he has retained to the present day. In describing the character of Cæsar, without reference to that of his contemporaries, it is impossible not to declare him to have been terribly cruel. From bloodthirstiness he slaughtered none; but neither from tenderness did he spare any. All was done from policy; and when policy seemed to him to demand blood, he could, without a scruple,—as far as we can judge, without a pang,—order the destruction of human beings, having no regard to number, sex, age, innocence, or helplessness. Our only excuse for him is that he was a Roman, and that Romans were indifferent to blood. Suicide was with them the common mode of avoiding otherwise inevitable misfortune, and it was natural that men who made light of their own lives should also make light of the lives of others. Of all those with whose names the reader will become acquainted in the following pages, hardly one or two died in their beds. Cæsar and Pompey, the two great ones, were murdered. Dumnorix, the Æduan, was killed by Cæsar's orders. Vercingetorix, the gallantest of the Gauls, was kept alive for years that his death might grace Cæsar's Triumph. Ariovistus, the German, escaped from Cæsar, but we hear soon after of his death, and that the Germans resented it. He doubtless was killed by a Roman weapon. What became of the hunted Ambiorix we do not know, but his brother king Cativoleus poisoned himself with the juice of yew-tree. Crassus, the partner of Cæsar and Pompey in the first triumvirate, was killed by

the Parthians. Young Crassus, the son, Cæsar's officer in Gaul, had himself killed by his own men that he might not fall into the hands of the Parthians, and his head was cut off and sent to his father. Labienus fell at Munda, in the last civil war in Spain. Quintus Cicero, Cæsar's lieutenant, and his greater brother, the orator, and his son, perished in the proscriptions of the second triumvirate. Titurius and Cotta were slaughtered with all their army by Ambiorix. Afranius was killed by Cæsar's soldiers after the last battle in Africa. Petreius was hacked to pieces in amicable contest by King Juba. Varro indeed lived to be an old man, and to write many books. Domitius, who defended Marseilles for Pompey, was killed in the flight after Pharsalia. Trebonius, who attacked Marseilles by land, was killed by a son-in-law of Cicero at Smyrna. Of Decimus Brutus, who attacked Marseilles by sea, one Camillus cut off the head and sent it as a present to Antony. Curio, who attempted to master the province of Africa on behalf of Cæsar, rushed amidst his enemy's swords and was slaughtered. King Juba, who conquered him, failing to kill himself, had himself killed by a slave. Attius Varus, who had held the province for Pompey, fell afterwards at Munda. Marc Antony, Cæsar's great lieutenant in the Pharsalian wars, stabbed himself. Cassius Longinus, another lieutenant under Cæsar, was drowned. Scipio, Pompey's partner in greatness at Pharsalia, destroyed himself in Africa. Bibulus, his chief admiral, pined to death. Young Ptolemy, to whom Pompey fled, was drowned in the Nile. The fate of his sister **Cleopatra**

is known to all the world. Pharnaces, Cæsar's enemy in Asia, fell in battle. Cato destroyed himself at Utica. Pompey's eldest son, Cnæus, was caught wounded in Spain and slaughtered. Sextus the younger was killed some years afterwards by one of Antony's soldiers. Brutus and Cassius, the two great conspirators, both committed suicide. But of these two we hear little or nothing in the Commentaries; nor of Augustus Cæsar, who did contrive to live in spite of all the bloodshed through which he had waded to the throne. Among the whole number there are not above three, if so many, who died fairly fighting in battle.

The above is a list of the names of men of mark,—of warriors chiefly, of men who, with their eyes open, knowing what was before them, went out to encounter danger for certain purposes. The bloody catalogue is so complete, so nearly comprises all whose names are mentioned, that it strikes the reader with almost a comic horror. But when we come to the slaughter of whole towns, the devastation of country effected purposely that men and women might starve, to the abandonment of the old, the young, and the tender, that they might perish on the hillsides, to the mutilation of crowds of men, to the burning of cities told us in a passing word, to the drowning of many thousands,—mentioned as we should mention the destruction of a brood of rats,—the comedy is all over, and the heart becomes sick. Then it is that we remember that the coming of Christ has changed all things, and that men now,—though terrible things have been done since Christ came to us,—are not as men were in the days of Cæsar.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR DRIVES FIRST THE SWISS AND THEN THE GERMANS OUT OF GAUL.—B.C. 58.

It has been remarked in the preceding chapter that Cæsar does not appear to have received any commission for the subjugation of Gaul when he took military charge of his three provinces. The Gauls were still feared in Rome, and it was his duty to see that they did not make their way over the Alps into the Roman territory. It was also his duty to protect from invasion, and also from rebellion, that portion of Gaul which had already been constituted a Roman province, but in which the sympathies of the people were still rather with their old brethren than with their new masters. The experience, however, which we have of great and encroaching empires tells us how probable it is that the protection of that which the strong already holds should lead to the grasping of more, till at last all has been grasped. It is thus that our own empire in India has grown. It was thus that the Spanish empire grew in America. It is thus that the empire of the United States is now growing. It was thus that Prussia, driven, as we all remember, by

the necessity of self-preservation, took Nassau the other day, and Hanover and Holstein and Hesse. It was thus that the wolf claimed all the river, not being able to endure the encroaching lamb. The humane reader of history execrates, as he reads, the cruel, all-absorbing, ravenous wolf. But the philosophical reader perceives that in this way, and in no other, is civilisation carried into distant lands. The wolf, though he be a ravenous wolf, brings with him energy and knowledge.

What may have been Cæsar's own aspirations in regard to Gaul, when the government of the provinces was confided to him, we have no means of knowing. We may surmise,—indeed we feel that we know,—that he had a project in hand much greater to him, in his view of its result, than could be the adding of any new province to the Republic, let the territory added be as wide as all Gaul. He had seen enough of Roman politics to know that real power in Rome could only belong to a master of legions. Both Marius and Sulla had prevailed in the city by means of the armies which they had levied as the trusted generals of the Republic. Pompey had had his army trained to conquest in the East, and it had been expected that he also would use it to the same end. He had been magnanimous, or half-hearted, or imprudent, as critics of his conduct might choose to judge him then and may choose to judge him now, and on reaching Italy from the East had disbanded his legions. As a consequence, he was at that moment, when Cæsar was looking out into the future and preparing his own

career, fain to seek some influence in the city by joining himself in a secret compact with Cæsar, his natural enemy, and with Crassus. Cæsar, seeing all this, knowing how Marius and Sulla had succeeded and had failed, seeing what had come of the magnanimity of Pompey—resolved no doubt that, whatever might be the wars in which they should be trained, he would have trained legions at his command. When, therefore, he first found a cause for war, he was ready for war. He had not been long proconsul before there came a wicked lamb and drank at his stream.

In describing to us the way in which he conquered lamb after lamb throughout the whole country which he calls Gallia, he tells us almost nothing of himself. Of his own political ideas, of his own ambition, even of his doings in Italy through those winter months which he generally passed on the Roman side of the Alps, having left his army in winter quarters under his lieutenants, he says but a very few words. His record is simply the record of the campaigns; and although he now and then speaks of the dignity of the Republic, he hardly ever so far digresses from the narrative as to give to the reader any idea of the motives by which he is actuated. Once in these seven memoirs of seven years' battling in Gaul, and once only, does he refer to a motive absolutely personal to himself. When he succeeded in slaughtering a fourth of the emigrating Swiss, which was his first military success in Gaul, he tells us that he had then revenged an injury to himself as well as an injury to the Republic, because the grandfather of his father-in-law

had in former wars been killed by the very tribe which he had just destroyed !

It is to be observed, also, that he does not intentionally speak in the first person, and that when he does so it is in some passage of no moment, in which the personality is accidental and altogether trivial. He does not speak of "I" and "me," but of Cæsar, as though he, Cæsar, who wrote the Commentary, were not the Cæsar of whom he is writing. Not unfrequently he speaks strongly in praise of himself ; but as there is no humility in his tone, so also is there no pride, even when he praises himself. He never seems to boast, though he tells us of his own exploits as he does of those of his generals and centurions. Without any diffidence he informs us now and again how, at the end of this or that campaign, a "supplication," or public festival and thanksgiving for his victories, was decreed in Rome, on the hearing of the news,—to last for fifteen or twenty days, as the case might be.

Of his difficulties at home,—the political difficulties with which he had to contend,—he says never a word. And yet at times they must have been very harassing. We hear from other sources that during these wars in Gaul his conduct was violently reprobated in Rome, in that he had, with the utmost cruelty, attacked and crushed states supposed to be in amity with Rome, and that it was once even proposed to give him up to the enemy as a punishment for grievous treachery to the enemy. Had it been so resolved by the Roman Senate,—had such a law been enacted,—the power to carry out the law would have been wanted. It was easier

to grant a “supplication” for twenty days than to stop his career after his legions had come to know him.

Nor is there very much said by Cæsar of his strategic difficulties; though now and then, especially when his ships are being knocked about on the British coast, and again when the iron of his heel has so bruised the Gauls that they all turn against him in one body under Vercingetorix, the reader is allowed to see that he is pressed hard enough. But it is his rule to tell the thing he means to do, the way he does it, and the completeness of the result, in the fewest possible words. If any student of the literature of battles would read first Cæsar’s seven books of the Gallic War, and then Mr Kinglake’s first four volumes of the ‘Invasion of the Crimea,’ he would be able to compare two most wonderful examples of the dexterous use of words, in the former of which the narrative is told with the utmost possible brevity, and in the latter with almost the utmost possible prolixity. And yet each narrative is equally clear, and each equally distinguished by so excellent an arrangement of words, that the reader is forced to acknowledge that the story is told to him by a great master.

In praising others,—his lieutenants, his soldiers, and occasionally his enemies,—Cæsar is often enthusiastic, though the praise is conferred by a word or two,—is given, perhaps, simply in an epithet added on for that purpose to a sentence planned with a wholly different purpose. Of blame he is very sparing; so much so, that it almost seems that he looked upon certain imperfections, in regard even to faith as well as valour

or prudence, as necessary to humanity, and pardonable because of their necessity. He can tell of the absolute destruction of a legion through the folly and perhaps cowardice of one of his lieutenants, without heaping a word of reproach on the name of the unfortunate. He can relate how a much-favoured tribe fell off from their faith again and again without expressing anger at their faithlessness, and can explain how they were,—hardly forgiven, but received again as friends,—because it suited him so to treat them. But again he can tell us, without apparently a quiver of the pen, how he could devote to destruction a city with all its women and all its children, so that other cities might know what would come to them if they did not yield and obey, and become vassals to the godlike hero in whose hands Providence had placed their lives and their possessions.

It appears that Cæsar never failed to believe in himself. He is far too simple in his language, and too conscious of his own personal dignity, to assert that he has never been worsted. But his very simplicity seems to convey the assurance that such cannot ultimately be the result of any campaign in which he is engaged. He seems to imply that victory attends him so certainly that it would be futile in any case to discuss its probability. He feared no one, and was therefore the cause of awe to others. He could face his own legions when they would not obey his call to arms, and reduce them to obedience by a word. Lucan, understanding his character well, says of him that “he deserved to be feared, for he feared nothing;”

“meruitque timeri Nil metuens.” He writes of himself as we might imagine some god would write who knew that his divine purpose must of course prevail, and who would therefore never be in the way of entertaining a doubt. With Cæsar there is always this godlike simplicity, which makes his “Veni, vidi, vici,” the natural expression of his mind as to his own mode of action. The same thing is felt in the very numerous but very brief records of the punishments which he inflicted. Cities are left desolate, as it were with a wave of his hand, but he hardly deigns to say that his own hand has even been waved. He tells us of one Acco who had opposed him, that, “Graviore sententiâ pronunciatâ,”—as though there had been some jury to pronounce this severe sentence, which was in fact pronounced only by himself, Cæsar,—he inflicted punishment on him “more majorum.” We learn from other sources that this punishment consisted in being stripped naked, confined by the neck in a cleft stick, and then being flogged to death. In the next words, having told us in half a sentence that he had made the country too hot to hold the fugitive accomplices of the tortured chief, he passes on into Italy with the majestic step of one much too great to dwell long on these small but disagreeable details. And we feel that he is too great.

It has been already said that the great proconsular wolf was not long in hearing that a lamb had come down to drink of his stream. The Helvetii, or Swiss, as we call them,—those tribes which lived on the Lake Lemán, and among the hills and valleys to the north

of the lake,—had made up their minds that they were inhabiting but a poor sort of country, and that they might considerably better themselves by leaving their mountains and going out into some part of Gaul, in which they might find themselves stronger than the existing tribes, and might take possession of the fat of the land. In doing so, their easiest way out of their own country would lie by the Rhone, where it now runs through Geneva into France. But in taking this route the Swiss would be obliged to pass over a corner of the Roman province. Here was a case of the lamb troubling the waters with a vengeance. When this was told to Cæsar,—that these Swiss intended, “*facere iter per Provinciam nostram*”—“to do their travelling through our Province,”—he hurried over the Alps into Gaul, and came to Geneva as fast as he could travel.

He begins his first book by a geographical definition of Gaul, which no doubt was hardly accurate, but which gives us a singularly clear idea of that which Cæsar desired to convey. In speaking of Gallia he intends to signify the whole country from the outflow of the Rhine into the ocean down to the Pyrenees, and then eastward to the Rhone, to the Swiss mountains, and the borders of the Roman Province. This he divides into three parts, telling us that the Belgians inhabited the part north of the Seine and Marne, the people of Aquitania the part south of the Garonne, and the Gauls or Celts the intermediate territory. Having so far described the scene of his action, he rushes off at once to the dreadful sin of the Swiss emigrants in desiring to pass through “our Province.”

He has but one legion in Further Gaul,—that is, in the Roman province on the further side of the Alps from Rome; and therefore, when ambassadors come to him from the Swiss, asking permission to go through the corner of land, and promising that they will do no harm in their passage, he temporises with them. He can't give them an answer just then, but must think of it. They must come back to him by a certain day,—when he will have more soldiers ready. Of course he refuses. The Swiss make some slight attempt, but soon give that matter up in despair. There is another way by which they can get out of their mountains,—through the territory of a people called Sequani; and for doing this they obtain leave. But Cæsar knows how injurious the Swiss lambs will be to him and his wolves, should they succeed in getting round to the back of his Province,—that Roman Province which left the name of Provence in modern France till France refused to be divided any longer into provinces. And he is, moreover, invited by certain friends of the Roman Republic, called the Ædui, to come and stop these rough Swiss travellers. He is always willing to help the Ædui, although these Ædui are a fickle, inconstant people,—and he is, above all things, willing to get to war. So he comes upon the rear of the Swiss when three portions of the people have passed the river Arar (Saone), and one portion is still behind. This hindermost tribe,—for the wretches were all of one tribe or mountain canton,—he sets upon and utterly destroys; and on this occasion congratulates himself on having

avenged himself upon the slayers of the grandfather of his father-in-law.

There can be nothing more remarkable in history than this story of the attempted emigration of the Helvetii, which Cæsar tells us without the expression of any wonder. The whole people made up their minds that, as their borders were narrow, their numbers increasing, and their courage good, they would go forth,—men, women, and children,—and seek other homes. We read constantly of the emigrations of people,—of the Northmen from the north covering the southern plains, of Danes and Jutes entering Britain, of men from Scandinavia coming down across the Rhine, and the like. We know that after this fashion the world has become peopled. But we picture to ourselves generally a concourse of warriors going forth and leaving behind them homes and friends, to whom they may or may not return. With these Swiss wanderers there was to be no return. All that they could not take with them they destroyed, burning their houses, and burning even their corn, so that there should be no means of turning their steps backward. They do make considerable progress, getting as far into France as Autun,—three-fourths of them at least getting so far; but near this they are brought to an engagement by Cæsar, who outgenerals them on a hill. The prestige of the Romans had not as yet established itself in these parts, and the Swiss nearly have the best of it. Cæsar owns, as he does not own again above once or twice, that the battle between them was very long, and for long very doubtful. But

at last the poor Helvetii are driven in slaughter. Cæsar, however, is not content that they should simply fly. He forces them back upon their old territory,—upon their burnt houses and devastated fields,—lest certain Germans should come and live there, and make themselves disagreeable. And they go back;—so many, at least, go back as are not slain in the adventure. With great attempt at accuracy, Cæsar tells us that 368,000 human beings went out on the expedition, and that 110,000, or less than a third, found their way back. Of those that perished, many hecatombs had been offered up to the shade of his father-in-law's grandfather.

Hereupon the Gauls begin to see how great a man is Cæsar. He tells us that no sooner was that war with the Swiss finished than nearly all the tribes of Gallia send to congratulate him. And one special tribe, those Ædui,—of whom we hear a great deal, and whom we never like because they are thoroughly anti-Gallican in all their doings till they think that Cæsar is really in trouble, and then they turn upon him,—have to beg of him a great favour. Two tribes,—the Ædui, whose name seems to have left no trace in France, and the Arverni, whom we still know in Auvergne,—have been long contending for the upper hand; whereupon the Arverni and their friends the Sequani have called in the assistance of certain Germans from across the Rhine. It went badly then with the Ædui. And now one of their kings, named Divitiacus, implores the help of Cæsar. Would Cæsar be kind enough to expel these horrid Germans, and

get back the hostages, and free them from a burdensome dominion, and put things a little to rights? And, indeed, not only were the *Ædui* suffering from these Germans, and their king, *Ariovistus*; it is going still worse with the *Sequani*, who had called them in. In fact, *Ariovistus* was an intolerable nuisance to that eastern portion of Gaul. Would *Cæsar* be kind enough to drive him out? *Cæsar* consents, and then we are made to think of another little fable,—of the prayer which the horse made to the man for assistance in his contest with the stag, and of the manner in which the man got upon the horse, and never got down again. *Cæsar* was not slow to mount, and when once in the saddle, certainly did not mean to leave it.

Cæsar tells us his reasons for undertaking this commission. The *Ædui* had often been called “brothers” and “cousins” by the Roman Senate; and it was not fitting that men who had been so honoured should be domineered over by Germans. And then, unless these marauding Germans could be stopped, they would fall into the habit of coming across the Rhine, and at last might get into the Province, and by that route into Italy itself. And *Ariovistus* himself was personally so arrogant a man that the thing must be made to cease. So *Cæsar* sends ambassadors to *Ariovistus*, and invites the barbarian to a meeting. The barbarian will not come to the meeting. If he wanted to see the Roman, he would go to the Roman: if the Roman wants to see him, the Roman may come to him. Such is the reply of *Ariovistus*. Ambassadors pass between them, and there is a good deal of argument, in which

the barbarian has the best of it. Cæsar, with his god-like simplicity, scorns not to give the barbarian the benefit of his logic. Ariovistus reminds Cæsar that the Romans have been in the habit of governing the tribes conquered by them after their fashion, without interference from him, Ariovistus; and that the Germans claim and mean to exercise the same right. He goes on to say that he is willing enough to live in amity with the Romans; but will Cæsar be kind enough to remember that the Germans are a people unconquered in war, trained to the use of arms, and how hardy he might judge when he was told that for fourteen years they had not slept under a roof! In the mean time other Gauls were complaining, and begging for assistance. The Treviri, people of the country where Treves now stands, are being harassed by the terrible yellow-haired Suevi, who at this time seem to have possessed nearly the whole of Prussia as it now exists on the further side of the Rhine, and who had the same desire to come westward that the Prussians have evinced since. And a people called the Harudes, from the Danube, are also harassing the poor Ædui. Cæsar, looking at these things, sees that unless he is quick, the northern and southern Germans may join their forces. He gets together his commissariat, and flies at Ariovistus very quickly.

Throughout all his campaigns, Cæsar, as did Napoleon afterwards, effected everything by celerity. He preaches to us no sermon on the subject, favours us with no disquisition as to the value of despatch in war, **but** constantly tells us that he moved all his army

“*magnis itineribus*”—by very rapid marches; that he went on with his work night and day, and took precautions “*magno opere*,”—with much labour and all his care,—to be beforehand with the enemy. In this instance Ariovistus tries to reach a certain town of the poor Sequani, then called Vesontio, now known to us as Besançon,—the same name, but very much altered. It consisted of a hill, or natural fortress, almost surrounded by a river, or natural fosse. There is nothing, says Cæsar, so useful in a war as the possession of a place thus naturally strong. Therefore he hurries on and gets before Ariovistus, and occupies the town. The reader already begins to feel that Cæsar is destined to divine success. The reader indeed knows that beforehand, and expects nothing worse for Cæsar than hairbreadth escapes. But the Romans themselves had not as yet the same confidence in him. Tidings are brought to him at Vesontio that his men are terribly afraid of the Germans. And so, no doubt, they were. These Romans, though by the art of war they had been made fine soldiers,—though they had been trained in the Eastern conquests and the Punic wars, and invasions of all nations around them,—were nevertheless, up to this day, greatly afraid even of the Gauls. The coming of the Gauls into Italy had been a source of terror to them ever since the days of Brennus. And the Germans were worse than the Gauls. The boast made by Ariovistus that his men never slept beneath a roof was not vain or useless. They were a horrid, hirsute, yellow-haired people, the flashing aspect of whose eyes could hardly be endured

by an Italian. The fear is so great that the soldiers “sometimes could not refrain even from tears ;”—“neque interdum lacrimas tenere poterant.” When we remember what these men became after they had been a while with Cæsar, their blubbering awe of the Germans strikes us as almost comic. And we are reminded that the Italians of those days were, as they are now, more prone to show the outward signs of emotion than is thought to be decorous with men in more northern climes. We can hardly realise the idea of soldiers crying from fear. Cæsar is told by his centurions that so great is this feeling, that the men will probably refuse to take up their arms when called upon to go out and fight ; whereupon he makes a speech to all his captains and lieutenants, full of boasting, full of scorn, full, no doubt, of falsehood, but using a bit of truth whenever the truth could aid him. We know that among other great gifts Cæsar had the gift of persuasion. From his tongue, also, as from Nestor’s, could flow “words sweeter than honey,”—or sharper than steel. At any rate, if others will not follow him, his tenth legion, he knows, will be true to him. He will go forth with that one legion,—if necessary, with that legion of true soldiers, and with no others. Though he had been at his work but a short time, he already had his picked men, his guards, his favourite regiments, his tenth legion ; and he knew well how to use their superiority and valour for the creation of those virtues in others.

Then Ariovistus sends ambassadors, and declares that he now is willing to meet Cæsar. Let them meet on a certain plain, each bringing only his cavalry

guard. Ariovistus suggests that foot-soldiers might be dangerous, knowing that Cæsar's foot-soldiers would be Romans, and that his cavalry are Gauls. Cæsar agrees, but takes men out of his own tenth legion, mounted on the horses of the less-trusted allies. The accounts of these meetings, and the arguments which we are told are used on this and that side, are very interesting. We are bound to remember that Cæsar is telling the story for both sides, but we feel that he tries to tell it fairly. Ariovistus had very little to say to Cæsar's demands, but a great deal to say about his own exploits. The meeting, however, was broken up by an attack made by the Germans on Cæsar's mounted guard, and Cæsar retires,—not, however, before he has explained to Ariovistus his grand idea of the protection due by Rome to her allies. Then Ariovistus proposes another meeting, which Cæsar declines to attend, sending, however, certain ambassadors. Ariovistus at once throws the ambassadors into chains, and then there is nothing for it but a fight.

The details of all these battles cannot be given within our short limits, and there is nothing special in this battle to tempt us to dwell upon it. Cæsar describes to us the way in which the German cavalry and infantry fought together, the footmen advancing from amidst the horsemen, and then returning for protection. His own men fight well, and the Germans, in spite of their flashing eyes, are driven head long in a rout back to the Rhine. Ariovistus succeeds in getting over the river and saving himself, but he has to leave his two daughters behind, and his two

wives. The two wives and one of the daughters are killed; the other daughter is taken prisoner. Cæsar had sent as one of his ambassadors to the German a certain dear friend of his, who, as we heard before, was, with his comrade, at once subjected to chains. In the flight this ambassador is recovered. “Which thing, indeed, gave Cæsar not less satisfaction than the victory itself,—in that he saw one of the honestest men of the Province of Gaul, his own familiar friend and guest, rescued from the hands of his enemies and restored to him. Nor did Fortune diminish this gratification by any calamity inflicted on the man. Thrice, as he himself told the tale, had it been decided by lot in his own presence whether he should then be burned alive or reserved for another time.” So Cæsar tells the story, and we like him for his enthusiasm, and are glad to hear that the comrade ambassador also is brought back.

The yellow-haired Suevi, when they hear of all this, desist from their invasion on the lower Rhine, and hurry back into their own country, not without misfortunes on the road. So great already is Cæsar’s name, that tribes, acting as it were on his side, dare to attack even the Suevi. Then, in his “*Veni, vidi, vici*” style, he tells us that, having in one summer finished off two wars, he is able to put his army into winter quarters even before the necessary time, so that he himself may go into his other Gaul across the Alps,—“*ad conventus agendos*,”—to hold some kind of session or assizes for the government of his province, and especially to collect more soldiers.

CHAPTER III.

SECOND BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR SUBDUES
THE BELGIAN TRIBES.—B.C. 57.

THE man had got on the horse's back, but the horse had various disagreeable enemies in attacking whom the man might be very useful, and the horse was therefore not as yet anxious to unseat his rider. Would Cæsar be so good as to go and conquer the Belgian tribes? Cæsar is not slow in finding reasons for so doing. The Belgians are conspiring together against him. They think that as all Gaul has been reduced,—or “pacified,” as Cæsar calls it,—the Roman conqueror will certainly bring his valour to bear upon them, and that they had better be ready. Cæsar suggests that it would no doubt be felt by them as a great grievance that a Roman army should remain all the winter so near to them. In this way, and governed by these considerations, the Belgian lambs disturb the stream very sadly, and the wolf has to look to it. He collects two more legions, and, as soon as the earth brings forth the food necessary for his increased number of men and horses, he hurries off against these Belgian tribes of Northern Gallia. Of these, one tribe, the

Remi, immediately send word to him that they are not wicked lambs like the others ; they have not touched the waters. All the other Belgians, say the Remi, and with them a parcel of Germans, are in a conspiracy together. Even their very next-door neighbours, their brothers and cousins, the Suessiones, are wicked ; but they, the Remi, have steadily refused even to sniff at the stream, which they acknowledge to be the exclusive property of the good wolf. Would the wolf be kind enough to come and take possession of them and all their belongings, and allow them to be the humblest of his friends ? We come to hate these Remi, as we do the Ædui ; but they are wise in their generation, and escape much of the starvation and massacring and utter ruin to which the other tribes are subjected. Among almost all these so-called Belgian tribes we find the modern names which are familiar to us. Rheims is in the old country of the Remi, Soissons in that of the Suessiones. Beauvais represents the Bellovaci, Amiens the Ambiani, Arras the Atrebates, Treves the Treviri,—as has been pointed out before. Silva Arduenna is, of course, the Forest of Ardennes.

The campaign is commenced by an attack made by the other Belgians on those unnatural Remi who have gone over to the Romans. There is a town of theirs, Bibrax, now known, or rather not known, as Bievre, and here the Remi are besieged by their brethren. When Bibrax is on the point of falling,—and we can imagine what would then have been the condition of the townsmen,—they send to Cæsar, who is only eight miles distant. Unless Cæsar will help, they cannot endure

any longer such onslaught as is made on them. Cæsar, having bided his time, of course sends help, and the poor besieging Belgians fall into inextricable confusion. They agree to go home, each to his own country, and from thence to proceed to the defence of any tribe which Cæsar might attack. "So," says Cæsar, as he ends the story of this little affair, "without any danger on our part, our men killed as great a number of theirs as the space of the day would admit." When the sun set, and not till then, came an end to the killing,—such having been the order of Cæsar.

That these Belgians had really formed any intention of attacking the Roman province, or even any Roman ally, there is no other proof than that Cæsar tells us that they had all conspired. But whatever might be their sin, or what the lack of sin on their part, he is determined to go on with the war till he has subjugated them altogether. On the very next day he attacks the Suessiones, and gets as far as Noviodunum, —Noyons. The people there, when they see how terrible are his engines of war, give up all idea of defending themselves, and ask for terms. The Bellovaci do the same. At the instigation of his friends the Remi, he spares the one city, and, to please the Ædui, the other. But he takes away all their arms, and exacts hostages. From the Bellovaci, because they have a name as a powerful people, he takes 600 hostages. Throughout all these wars it becomes a matter of wonder to us what Cæsar did with all these hostages, and how he maintained them. It was, however, no doubt clearly understood that they would be killed if

the town, or state, or tribe by which they were given should misbehave, or in any way thwart the great conqueror.

The Ambiani come next, and the ancestors of our intimate friends at Amiens soon give themselves up. The next to them are the Nervii, a people far away to the north, where Lille now is and a considerable portion of Flanders. Of these Cæsar had heard wonderful travellers' tales. They were a people who admitted no dealers among them, being in this respect very unlike their descendants, the Belgians of to-day; they drank no wine, and indulged in no luxuries, lest their martial valour should be diminished. They send no ambassadors to Cæsar, and resolve to hold their own if they can. They trust solely to infantry in battle, and know nothing of horses. Against the cavalry of other nations, however, they are wont to protect themselves by artificial hedges, which they make almost as strong as walls.

Cæsar in attacking the Nervii had eight legions, and he tells us how he advanced against them "*consuetudine suâ*,"—after his usual fashion. For some false information had been given to the Nervii on this subject, which brought them into considerable trouble. He sent on first his cavalry, then six legions, the legions consisting solely of foot-soldiers; after these all the baggage, commissariat, and burden of the army, comprising the materials necessary for sieges; and lastly, the two other legions, which had been latest enrolled. It may be as well to explain here that the legion in the time of Cæsar consisted on paper of six thousand heavy-

armed foot-soldiers. There were ten cohorts in a legion, and six centuries, or six hundred men, in each cohort. It may possibly be that, as with our regiments, the numbers were frequently not full. Eight full legions would thus have formed an army consisting of 48,000 infantry. The exact number of men under his orders Cæsar does not mention here or elsewhere.

According to his own showing, Cæsar is hurried into a battle before he knows where he is. Cæsar, he says, had everything to do himself, all at the same time,—to unfurl the standard of battle, to give the signal with the trumpet, to get back the soldiers from their work, to call back some who had gone to a distance for stuff to make a rampart, to draw up the army, to address the men, and then to give the word. In that matter of oratory, he only tells them to remember their old valour. The enemy was so close upon them, and so ready for fighting, that they could scarcely put on their helmets and take their shields out of their cases. So great was the confusion that the soldiers could not get to their own ranks, but had to fight as they stood; under any flag that was nearest to them. There were so many things against them, and especially those thick artificial hedges, which prevented them even from seeing, that it was impossible for them to fight according to any method, and in consequence there were vicissitudes of fortune. One is driven to feel that on this occasion Cæsar was caught napping. The Nervii did at times and places seem to be getting the best of it. The ninth and tenth legions pursue one tribe into a river, and then they have to fight them again, and drive them

out of the river. The eleventh and eighth, having put to flight another tribe, are attacked on the very river-banks. The twelfth and the seventh have their hands equally full, when Boduognatus, the Nervian chief, makes his way into the very middle of the Roman camp. So great is the confusion that the Treviri, who had joined Cæsar on this occasion as allies, although reputed the bravest of the cavalry of Gaul, run away home, and declare that the Romans are conquered. Cæsar, however, comes to the rescue, and saves his army on this occasion by personal prowess. When he saw how it was going,—“*rem esse in angusto*,”—how the thing had got itself into the very narrowest neck of a difficulty, he seizes a shield from a common soldier,—having come there himself with no shield,—and rushes into the fight. When the soldiers saw him, and saw, too, that what they did was done in his sight, they fought anew, and the onslaught of the enemy was checked.

Perhaps readers will wish that they could know how much of all this is exactly true. It reads as though it were true. We cannot in these days understand how one brave man at such a moment should be so much more effective than another, how he should be known personally to the soldiers of an army so large, how Cæsar should have known the names of the centurions,—for he tells us that he addresses them by name;—and yet it reads like truth; and the reader feels that as Cæsar would hardly condescend to boast, so neither would he be constrained by any modern feeling of humility from telling any truth of himself. It is as though Minerva were to tell us of some descent which she made

among the Trojans. The Nervii fight on, but of course they are driven in flight. The nation is all but destroyed, so that the very name can but hardly remain ; —so at least we are told here, though we hear of them again as a tribe by no means destroyed or powerless. When out of six hundred senators there are but three senators left, when from sixty thousand fighting men the army has been reduced to scarcely five hundred, Cæsar throws the mantle of his mercy over the survivors. He allows them even to go and live in their own homes, and forbids their neighbours to harass them. There can be no doubt that Cæsar nearly got the worst of it in this struggle, and we may surmise that he learned a lesson which was of service to him in subsequent campaigns.

But there are still certain Aduatici to be disposed of before the summer is over,—people who had helped the Nervii,—who have a city of their own, and who live somewhere in the present Namur district.* At first they fight a little round the walls of their town ; but when they see what terrible instruments Cæsar

* These people were the descendants of those Cimbri who, half a century before, had caused such woe to Rome ! The Cimbri, we are told, had gone forth from their lands, and had been six times victorious over Roman armies, taking possession of “ our Province,” and threatening Italy and Rome. The whole empire of the Republic had been in danger, but was at last saved by the courage, skill, and rapidity of Marius. In going forth from their country they had left a remnant behind with such of their possessions as they could not carry with them ; and these Aduatiei were the children and grandchildren of that remnant. Cæsar doubtless remembered it all.

has, by means of which to get at them over their very walls,—how he can build up a great turret at a distance, which, at that distance, is ludicrous to them, but which he brings near to them, so that it overhangs them, from which to harass them with arrows and stones, and against which, so high is it, they have no defence—then they send out and beg for mercy. Surely, they say, Cæsar and the Romans must have more than human power. They will give up everything, if only Cæsar out of his mercy will leave to them their arms. They are always at war with all their neighbours; and where would they be without arms?

Cæsar replies. Merits of their own they have none. How could a tribe have merits against which Cæsar was at war? Nevertheless, such being his custom, he will admit them to some terms of grace if they surrender before his battering-ram has touched their walls. But as for their arms, surely they must be joking with him. Of course their arms must be surrendered. What he had done for the Nervii he would do for them. He would tell their neighbours not to hurt them. They agree, and throw their arms into the outside ditch of the town, but not quite all their arms. A part,—a third,—are cunningly kept back; and when Cæsar enters the town, they who have kept their arms, and others unarmed, try to escape from the town. They fight, and some thousands are slain. Others are driven back, and these are sold for slaves. Who, we wonder, could have been the purchasers, and at what price on that day was a man to be bought in the city of the Aduatici?

Then Cæsar learns through his lieutenant, young Crassus, the son of his colleague in the triumvirate, that all the Belgian states, from the Scheldt to the Bay of Biscay, have been reduced beneath the yoke of the Roman people. The Germans, too, send ambassadors to him, so convinced are they that to fight against him is of no avail,—so wonderful an idea of this last war has pervaded all the tribes of barbarians. But Cæsar is in a hurry, and can hear no ambassadors now. He wants to get into Italy, and they must come again to him next summer.

For all which glorious doings a public thanksgiving of fifteen days is decreed, as soon as the news is heard in Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

THIRD BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR SUBDUES
THE WESTERN TRIBES OF GAUL.—B.C. 56.

IN the first few lines of the third book we learn that Cæsar had an eye not only for conquest, but for the advantages of conquest also. When he went into Italy at the end of the last campaign, he sent one Galba, whose descendant became emperor after Nero, with the twelfth legion, to take up his winter quarters in the upper valley of the Rhone, in order that an easier traffic might be opened to traders passing over the Alps in and out of Northern Italy. It seems that the passage used was that of the Great St Bernard, and Galba placed himself with his legion at that junction of the valley which we all know so well as Martigny. Here, however, he was attacked furiously in his camp by the inhabitants of the valley, who probably objected to being dictated to as to the amount of toll to be charged upon the travelling traders, and was very nearly destroyed. The Romans, however, at last, when they had neither weapons nor food left for maintaining their camp, resolved to cut their way through their enemies. This they did so effectually that they slaughtered more

than ten thousand men, and the other twenty thousand of Swiss warriors all took to flight ! Nevertheless Galba thought it as well to leave that inhospitable region, in which it was almost impossible to find food for the winter, and took himself down the valley and along the lake to the Roman Province. He made his winter-quarters among the Allobroges, who belonged to the Province,—a people living just south of the present Lyons. How the Allobroges liked it we are not told, but we know that they were then very faithful, although in former days they had given great trouble. Their position made faith to Rome almost a necessity. Whether, in such a position, Cæsar's lieutenants paid their way, and bought their corn at market price, we do not know. It was Cæsar's rule, no doubt, to make the country on which his army stood support his army.

When the number of men whom Cæsar took with him into countries hitherto unknown to him or his army is considered, and the apparently reckless audacity with which he did so, it must be acknowledged that he himself says very little about his difficulties. He must constantly have had armies for which to provide twice as large as our Crimean army,—probably as large as the united force of the English and French in the Crimea ; and he certainly could not bring with him what he wanted in ships. The road from Balaclava up to the heights over Sebastopol, we know, was very bad ; but it was short. The road from the foot of the Alps in the Roman province to the countries with which we were dealing in the last chapter could not, we should say, have been very good two thousand

years ago, and it certainly was very long ;—nearly a hundred miles for Cæsar to every single one of those that were so terrible to us in the Crimea. Cæsar, however, carried but little with him beyond his arms and implements of war, and of those the heaviest he no doubt made as he went. The men had an allowance of corn per day, besides so much pay. We are told that the pay before Cæsar's time was 100 *asses* a-month for the legionaries,—the *as* being less than a penny,—and that this was doubled by Cæsar. We can conceive that the money troubled him comparatively slightly, but that the finding of the daily corn and forage for so large a host of men and horses must have been very difficult. He speaks of the difficulty often, but never with that despair which was felt as to the roasting of our coffee in the Crimea. We hear of his waiting till forage should have grown, and sometimes there are necessary considerations “*de re frumentariâ*,”—about that great general question of provisions ; but of crushing difficulties very little is said, and of bad roads not a word. One great advantage Cæsar certainly had over Lord Raglan ;—he was his own special correspondent. Coffee his men certainly did not get ; but if their corn were not properly roasted for them, and if, as would be natural, the men grumbled, he had with him no licensed collector of grumbles to make public the sufferings of his men.

And now, when this affair of Galba's had been finished,—when Cæsar, as he tells us, really did think that all Gaul was “*pacatam*,” tranquillised, or at least subdued,—the Belgians conquered, the Germans driven

off, those Swiss fellows cut to pieces in the valley of the Rhone; when he thought that he might make a short visit into that other province of his, Illyricum, so that he might see what that was like,—he is told that another war has sprung up in Gaul! Young Crassus, with that necessity which of course was on him of providing winter food for the seventh legion which he had been ordered to take into Aquitania, has been obliged to send out for corn into the neighbouring countries. Of course a well-instructed young general, such as was Crassus, had taken hostages before he sent his men out among strange and wild barbarians. But in spite of that, the Veneti, a maritime people of ancient Brittany, just in that country of the Morbihan whither we now go to visit the works of the Druids at Carnac and Locmariaker, absolutely detained his two ambassadors;—so called afterwards, though in his first mention of them Cæsar names them as præfects and tribunes of the soldiers. Vannes, the capital of the department of the Morbihan, gives us a trace of the name of this tribe. The Veneti, who were powerful in ships, did not see why they should give their corn to Crassus. Cæsar, when he hears that ambassadors,—sacred ambassadors,—have been stopped, is filled with shame and indignation, and hurries off himself to look after the affair, having, as we may imagine, been able to see very little of Illyricum.

This horror of Cæsar in regard to his ambassadors,—in speaking of which he alludes to what the Gauls themselves felt when they came to understand what a thing they had done in making ambassadors prisoners.

—“legatos,”—a name that has always been held sacred and inviolate among all nations,—is very great, and makes him feel that he must really be in earnest. We are reminded of the injunctions, printed in Spanish, which the Spaniards distributed among the Indians of the continent, in the countries now called Venezuela and New Granada, explaining to the people, who knew nothing of Spanish or of printing, how they were bound to obey the orders of a distant king, who had the authority of a more distant Pope, who again,—so they claimed,—was delegated by a more distant God. The pain of history consists in the injustice of the wolf towards the lamb, joined to the conviction that thus, and no otherwise, could the lamb be brought to better than a sheepish mode of existence ! But Cæsar was in earnest.* The following is a translation of the tenth section of this book ; “There were these difficulties in carrying on the war which we have above shown.”—He alludes to the maritime capacities of the people whom he desires to conquer.—“Many things, nevertheless, urged Cæsar on to this war;—the wrongs of those Roman knights who had been detained, rebellion set on foot after an agreed surrender,”—that any

* And Cæsar was no doubt indignant as well as earnest, though, perhaps, irrational in his indignation. We know how sacred was held to be the person of the Roman citizen, and remember Cicero’s patriotic declaration, “*Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum,—scelus verberari;*” and again, the words which Horace puts into the mouth of Regulus when he asserts that the Roman soldier must be lost for ever in his shame, and useless, “*Qui lora restrictis lacertis Sensit iners timuitque mortem.*”

such surrender had been made we do not hear, though we do hear, incidentally, that Crassus had taken hostages ;—" a falling off from alliance after hostages had been given ; conspiracy among so many tribes ; and then this first consideration, that if this side of the country were disregarded, the other tribes might learn to think that they might take the same liberty. Then, when he bethought himself that, as the Gauls were prone to rebellion, and were quickly and easily excited to war, and that all men, moreover, are fond of liberty and hate a condition of subjection, he resolved that it would be well, rather than that other states should conspire,"—and to avoid the outbreak on behalf of freedom which might thus probably be made,—“ that his army should be divided, and scattered about more widely.” Treating all Gaul as a chess-board, he sends round to provide that the Treviri should be kept quiet. Readers will remember how far Treves is distant from the extremities of Brittany. The Belgians are to be looked to, lest they should rise and come and help. The Germans are to be prevented from crossing the Rhine. Labienus, who, during the Gallic wars, was Cæsar’s general highest in trust, is to see to all this. Crassus is to go back into Aquitania and keep the south quiet. Titurius Sabinus, destined afterwards to a sad end, is sent with three legions,—eighteen thousand men,—among the neighbouring tribes of Northern Brittany and Normandy. “ Young ” Decimus Brutus,—Cæsar speaks of him with that kind affection which the epithet conveys, and we remember, as we read, that this Brutus appears afterwards in history as one of Cæsar’s slayers,

in conjunction with his greater namesake,—young Decimus Brutus, the future conspirator in Rome, has confided to him the fleet which is to destroy these much less guilty distant conspirators, and Cæsar himself takes the command of his own legions on the spot. All this is told in fewer words than are here used in describing the telling, and the reader feels that he has to do with a mighty man, whose eyes are everywhere, and of whom an ordinary enemy would certainly say, Surely this is no man, but a god.

He tells us how great was the effect of his own presence on the shore, though the battle was carried on under young Brutus at sea. “What remained of the conflict,” he says, after describing their manœuvres, “depended on valour, in which our men were far away the superior; and this was more especially true because the affair was carried on so plainly in the sight of Cæsar and the whole army that no brave deed could pass unobserved. For all the hills and upper lands, from whence the view down upon the sea was close, were covered by the army.”

Of course he conquers the Veneti and other sea-going tribes, even on their own element. Whereupon they give themselves and all their belongings up to Cæsar. Cæsar, desirous that the rights of ambassadors shall hereafter be better respected among barbarians, determines that he must use a little severity. “*Gravius vindicandum statuit* ;”—“he resolved that the offence should be expiated with more than ordinary punishment.” Consequently, he kills all the senate, and sells all the other men as slaves! The pithy brevity, the

unapologetic dignity of the sentence, as he pronounced it and tells it to us, is heartrending, but, at this distance of time, delightful also. “Itaque, omni senatu necato, reliquos sub coronâ vendidit;”—“therefore, all the senate having been slaughtered, he sold the other citizens with chaplets on their heads;”—it being the Roman custom so to mark captives in war intended for sale. We can see him as he waves his hand and passes on. Surely he must be a god!

His generals in this campaign are equally successful. One Viridovix, a Gaul up in the Normandy country,—somewhere about Avranches or St Lo, we may imagine,—is entrapped into a fight, and destroyed with his army. Aquitania surrenders herself to Crassus, after much fighting, and gives up her arms.

Then Cæsar reflects that the Morini and the Menapii had as yet never bowed their heads to him. Boulogne and Calais stand in the now well-known territory of the Morini, but the Menapii lie a long way off, up among the mouths of the Scheldt and the Rhine,—the Low Countries of modern history,—an uncomfortable people then, who would rush into their woods and marshes after a spell of fighting, and who seemed to have no particular homes or cities that could be attacked or destroyed. It was nearly the end of summer just now, and the distance between, let us say, Vannes in Brittany, and Breda, or even Antwerp, seems to us to be considerable, when we remember the condition of the country, and the size of Cæsar’s army. But he had a few weeks to fill up, and then he might feel that all Gaul had been “pacified.” At present there was this

haughty little northern corner. “Omni Galliâ pacatâ, Morini Menapiique supererant;”—“all Gaul having been pacified, the Morini and Menapii remained.” He was, moreover, no doubt beginning to reflect that from the Morini could be made the shortest journey into that wild Ultima Thule of an island in which lived the Britanni. Cæsar takes advantage of the few weeks, and attacks these uncomfortable people. When they retreat into the woods, he cuts the woods down. He does cut down an immense quantity of wood, but the enemy only recede into thicker and bigger woods. Bad weather comes on, and the soldiers can no longer endure life in their skin tents. Let us fancy these Italians encountering winter in undrained Flanders, with no walls or roofs to protect them, and ordered to cut down interminable woods! Had a ‘Times’ been then written and filed, instead of a “Commentary” from the hands of the General-in-chief, we should probably have heard of a good deal of suffering. As it is, we are only told that Cæsar had to give up his enterprise for that year. He therefore burned all their villages, laid waste all their fields, and then took his army down into a more comfortable region south of the Seine, and there put them into winter quarters,—not much to the comfort of the people there residing.

CHAPTER V.

FOURTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR CROSSES THE RHINE, SLAUGHTERS THE GERMANS, AND GOES INTO BRITAIN.—B.C. 55.

IN the next year certain Germans, Usipetes and others, crossed the Rhine into Gaul, not far from the sea, as Cæsar tells us. He tells us again, that when he drove the Germans back over the river, it was near the confluence of the Meuse and the Rhine. When we remember how difficult it was for Cæsar to obtain information, we must acknowledge that his geography as to the passage of the Rhine out to the sea, and of the junction of the Rhine and the Meuse by the Waal, is wonderfully correct. The spot indicated as that at which the Germans were driven into the river would seem to be near Bommel in Holland, where the Waal and the Meuse join their waters, at the head of the island of Bommel, where Fort St André stands, or stood.*

* Cæsar speaks of the confluence of the Rhine and the "Mosa" as the spot at which he drove the Germans into the river,—and in various passages, speaking of the Mosa, clearly means the Meuse. It appears, however, to be the opinion of English scholars who have studied the topography of Cæsar's

Those wonderful Suevi, among whom the men alternately fight and plough, year and year about, caring more, however, for cattle than they do for corn, who are socialists in regard to land, having no private property in their fields,—who, all of them, from their youth upwards, do just what they please,—large, bony men, who wear, even in these cold regions, each simply some scanty morsel of skin covering,—who bathe in rivers all the year through, who deal with traders only to sell the spoils of war, who care but little for their horses, and ride, when they do ride, without saddles,—thinking nothing of men to whom such delicate appendages are necessary,—who drink no wine, and will have no neighbours near them,—these ferocious Suevi have driven other German tribes over the Rhine into Gaul. Cæsar, hearing this, is filled with apprehension. He knows the weakness of his poor friends the Gauls,—how prone they are to gossiping, of what a restless temper. It is in the country of the Menapii, the tribe with which he did not quite finish his little affair in the last chapter, that these Germans are settling; and there is no knowing what trouble the intruders may give him if he allows them to make themselves at home on that

campaigns with much labour, that the confluence of the Moselle and Rhine, from which Coblenz derives its name, is the spot intended. Napoleon, who has hardly made himself an authority on the affairs of Cæsar generally, but who is thought to be an authority in regard to topography, holds to the opinion that the site in Holland is intended to be described. Readers who are anxious on the subject can choose between the two; but readers who are not anxious will probably be more numerous.

side of the river. So he hurries off to give help to the poor Menapii.

Of course there is a sending of ambassadors. The Germans acknowledge that they have been turned out of their own lands by their brethren, the Suevi, who are better men than they are. But they profess that, in fighting, the Suevi, and the Suevi only, are their masters. Not even the immortal gods can stand against the Suevi. But they also are Germans, and are not at all afraid of the Romans. But in the proposition which they make they show some little awe. Will Cæsar allow them to remain where they are, or allot to them some other region on that side of the Rhine? Cæsar tells them that they may go and live, if they please, with the Ubii,—another tribe of Germans who occupy the Rhine country, probably where Cologne now stands, or perhaps a little north of it, and who seem already to have been forced over the Rhine,—they, or some of them,—and to have made good their footing somewhere in the region in which Charlemagne built his church, now called Aix-la-Chapelle. There they are, Germans still, and probably are so because these Ubii made good their footing. The Ubii also are in trouble with the Suevi; and if these intruders will go and join the Ubii, Cæsar will make it all straight for them. The intruders hesitate, but do not go, and at last attack Cæsar's cavalry, not without some success. During this fight there is double treachery,—first on the part of the Germans, and then on Cæsar's part,—which is chiefly memorable for the attack made on Cæsar in Rome. It was in consequence of the deceit here

practised that it was proposed by his enemies in the city that he should be given up by the Republic to the foe. Had any such decree been passed, it would not have been easy to give up Cæsar.

The Germans are, of course, beaten, and they are driven into the river on those low and then undrained regions in which the Rhine and the Meuse and the Waal confuse themselves and confuse travellers;—either here, or much higher up the river at Coblentz, but the reader will already have settled that question for himself at the beginning of the chapter. Cæsar speaks of these Germans as though they were all drowned,—men, women, and children. They had brought their entire families with them, and, when the fighting went against them, with their entire families they fled into the river. Cæsar was pursuing them after the battle, and they precipitated themselves over the banks. There, overcome by fear, fatigue, and the waters, they perished. There was computed to be a hundred and eighty thousand of them who were destroyed; but the Roman army was safe to a man.*

Then Cæsar made up his mind to cross the river. It seems that he had no intention of extending the empire of the Republic into what he called Germany, but that he thought it necessary to frighten the Germans. The cavalry of those intruding Usipetes had, luckily for them, been absent, foraging over the river; and he now sent to the Sigambri, among whom they

* “Hostium numerus capitum CDXXX millium fuisset,” from which words we are led to suppose that there were 180,000 fighting men, besides the women and children.

had taken refuge, desiring that these horsemen should be given up to him. But the Sigambri will not obey. The Germans seem to have understood that Cæsar had Gaul in his hands, to do as he liked with it ; but they grudged his interference beyond the Rhine. Cæsar, however, always managed to have a set of friends among his enemies, to help him in adjusting his enmities. We have heard of the Ædui in central Gaul, and of the Remi in the north. The Ubii were his German friends, who were probably at this time occupying both banks of the river ; and the Ubii ask him just to come over and frighten their neighbours. Cæsar resolves upon gratifying them. And as it is not consistent either with his safety or with his dignity to cross the river in boats, he determines to build a bridge.

Is there a schoolboy in England, or one who has been a schoolboy, at any Cæsar-reading school, who does not remember those memorable words, “*Tigna bina sesquipedalia*,” with which Cæsar begins his graphic account of the building of the bridge ? When the breadth of the river is considered, its rapidity, and the difficulty which there must have been in finding tools and materials for such a construction, in a country so wild and so remote from Roman civilisation, the creation of this bridge fills us with admiration for Cæsar’s spirit and capacity. He drove down piles into the bed of the river, two and two, prone against the stream. We could do that now, though hardly as quickly as Cæsar did it ; but we should want coffer-dams and steam-pumps, patent rammers, and a clerk of the works. He explains to us that he so built the foun-

dations that the very strength of the stream added to their strength and consistency. In ten days the whole thing was done, and the army carried over. Cæsar does not tell us at what suffering, or with the loss of how many men. It is the simplicity of everything which is so wonderful in these Commentaries. We have read of works constructed by modern armies, and of works which modern armies could not construct. We remember the road up from Balaclava, and the railway which was sent out from England. We know, too, what are the aids and appliances with which science has furnished us. But yet in no modern warfare do the difficulties seem to have been so light, so little worthy of mention, as they were to Cæsar. He made his bridge and took over his army, cavalry and all, in ten days. There must have been difficulty and hardship, and the drowning, we should fear, of many men; but Cæsar says nothing of all this.

Ambassadors immediately are sent. From the moment in which the bridge was begun, the Sigambri ran away and hid themselves in the woods. Cæsar burns all their villages, cuts down all their corn, and travels down into the country of the Ubii. He comforts them; and tidings of his approach then reach those terrible Suevi. They make ready for war on a grand scale; but Cæsar, reflecting that he had not brought his army over the river for the sake of fighting the Suevi, and telling us that he had already done enough for honour and for the good of the cause, took his army back after eighteen days spent in the journey, and destroyed his bridge.

Then comes a passage which makes a Briton vacillate between shame at his own ancient insignificance, and anger at Cæsar's misapprehension of his ancient character. There were left of the fighting season after Cæsar came back across the Rhine just a few weeks ; and what can he do better with them than go over and conquer Britannia ? This first record of an invasion upon us comes in at the fag-end of a chapter, and the invasion was made simply to fill up the summer ! Nobody, Cæsar tells us, seemed to know anything about the island ; and yet it was the fact that in all his wars with the Gauls, the Gauls were helped by men out of Britain. Before he will face the danger with his army he sends over a trusty messenger, to look about and find out something as to the coasts and harbours. The trusty messenger does not dare to disembark, but comes back and tells Cæsar what he has seen from his ship. Cæsar, in the mean time, has got together a great fleet somewhere in the Boulogne and Calais country ; and,—so he says,—messengers have come to him from Britain, whither rumours of his purpose have already flown, saying that they will submit themselves to the Roman Republic. We may believe just as much of that as we please. But he clearly thinks less of the Boulogne and Calais people than he does even of the Britons, which is a comfort to us. When these people,—then called Morini,—came to him, asking pardon for having dared to oppose him once before, and offering any number of hostages, and saying that they had been led on by bad advice, Cæsar admitted them into some degree of grace ; not wishing, as he tells us, to be

kept out of Britain by the consideration of such very small affairs. “*Neque has tantularum rerum occupationes sibi Britanniae anteponendas judicabat.*” We hope that the Boulogne and Calais people understand and appreciate the phrase. Having taken plenty of hostages, he determines to trust the Boulogne and Calais people, and prepares his ships for passing the Channel. He starts nearly at the third watch,—about midnight, we may presume. A portion of his army,—the cavalry,—encounter some little delay, such as has often occurred on the same spot since, even to travellers without horses. He himself got over to the British coast at about the fourth hour. This, at midsummer, would have been about a quarter past eight. As it was now late in the summer, it may have been nine o’clock in the morning when Cæsar found himself under the cliffs of Kent, and saw our armed ancestors standing along all the hills ready to meet him. He stayed at anchor, waiting for his ships, till about two P.M. His cavalry did not get across till four days afterwards. Having given his orders, and found a fitting moment and a fitting spot, Cæsar runs his ships up upon the beach.

Cæsar confesses to a good deal of difficulty in getting ashore. When we know how very hard it is to accomplish the same feat, on the same coast, in these days, with all the appliances of modern science to aid us, and, as we must presume, with no real intention on the part of the Cantii, or men of Kent, to oppose our landing, we can quite sympathise with Cæsar. The ships were so big that they could not be brought

into very shallow water. The Roman soldiers were compelled to jump into the sea, heavily armed, and there to fight with the waves and with the enemy. But the Britons, having the use of all their limbs, knowing the ground, standing either on the shore or just running into the shallows, made the landing uneasy enough. “*Nostri*,”—our men,—says Cæsar, with all these things against them, were not all of them so alert at fighting as was usual with them on dry ground ;—at which no one can be surprised.

Cæsar had two kinds of ships—“*naves longæ*,” long ships for carrying soldiers ; and “*naves onerariæ*,” ships for carrying burdens. The long ships do not seem to have been such ships of war as the Romans generally used in their *sea-fights*, but were handier, and more easily worked, than the transports. These he laid broadside to the shore, and harassed the poor natives with stones and arrows. Then the eagle-bearer of the tenth legion jumped into the sea, proclaiming that he, at any rate, would do his duty. Unless they wished to see their eagle fall into the hands of the enemy, they must follow him. “Jump down, he said, my fellow-soldiers, unless you wish to betray your eagle to the enemy. I at least will do my duty to the Republic and to our General. When he had said this with a loud voice, he threw himself out of the ship and advanced the eagle against the enemy.” Seeing and hearing this, the men leaped forth freely, from that ship and from others. As usual, there was some sharp fighting. *Pugnatum est ab utrisque acriter.*” It is

nearly always the same thing. Cæsar throws away none of his glory by underrating his enemy. But at length the Britons fly. "This thing only was wanting to Cæsar's usual good fortune,"—that he was deficient in cavalry wherewith to ride on in pursuit, and "take the island!" Considering how very short a time he remains in the island, we feel that his complaint against fortune is hardly well founded. But there is a general surrender, and a claiming of hostages, and after a few days a sparkle of new hope in the breasts of the Britons. A storm arises, and Cæsar's ships are so knocked about that he does not know how he will get back to Gaul. He is troubled by a very high tide, not understanding the nature of these tides. As he had only intended this for a little tentative trip,—a mere taste of a future war with Britain,—he had brought no large supply of corn with him. He must get back, by hook or by crook. The Britons, seeing how it is with him, think that they can destroy him, and make an attempt to do so. The seventh legion is in great peril, having been sent out to find corn, but is rescued. Certain of his ships,—those which had been most grievously handled by the storm,—he breaks up, in order that he may mend the others with their materials. When we think how long it takes us to mend ships, having dockyards, and patent slips, and all things ready, this is most marvellous to us. But he does mend his ships, and while so doing he has a second fight with the Britons, and again repulses them. There is a burning and destroying of everything far and wide, a gathering of ambassadors to Cæsar asking

for terms, a demand for hostages,—a double number of hostages now,—whom Cæsar desired to have sent over to him to Gaul, because at this time of the year he did not choose to trust them to ships that were unseaworthy; and he himself, with all his army, gets back into the Boulogne and Calais country. Two transports only are missing, which are carried somewhat lower down the coast. There are but three hundred men in these transports, and these the Morini of those parts threaten to kill unless they will give up their arms. But Cæsar sends help, and even these three hundred are saved from disgrace. There is, of course, more burning of houses and laying waste of fields because of this little attempt, and then Cæsar puts his army into winter quarters.

What would have been the difference to the world if the Britons, as they surely might have done, had destroyed Cæsar and every Roman, and not left even a ship to get back to Gaul? In lieu of this Cæsar could send news to Rome of these various victories, and have a public thanksgiving decreed,—on this occasion for twenty days.

CHAPTER VI.

FIFTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR'S SECOND INVASION OF BRITAIN.—THE GAULS RISE AGAINST HIM.—B.C. 54.

ON his return out of Britain, Cæsar, as usual, went over the Alps to look after his other provinces, and to attend to his business in Italy; but he was determined to make another raid upon the island. He could not yet assume that he had "taken it," and therefore he left minute instructions with his generals as to the building of more ships, and the repair of those which had been so nearly destroyed. He sends to Spain, he tells us, for the things necessary to equip his ships. We never hear of any difficulty about money. We know that he did obtain large grants from Rome for the support of his legions; but no scruple was made in making war maintain war, as far as such maintenance could be obtained. Cæsar personally was in an extremity of debt when he commenced his campaigns. He had borrowed an enormous sum, eight hundred and thirty talents, or something over £200,000, from Crassus,—who was specially the rich Roman of those days,—before he could take charge of his Spanish province. When his wars were over, he returned to Rome

with a great treasure ; and indeed during these wars in Gaul he expended large sums in bribing Romans. We may suppose that he found hoards among the barbarians, as Lord Clive did in the East Indies. Clive contented himself with taking some : Cæsar probably took all.

Having given the order about his ships, he settled a little matter in Illyricum, taking care to raise some tribute there also. He allows but a dozen lines for recording this winter work, and then tells us that he hurried back to his army and his ships. His command had been so well obeyed in regard to vessels, that he finds ready, of that special sort which he had ordered with one bank of oars only on each side, as many as six hundred, and twenty-eight of the larger sort. He gives his soldiers very great credit for their exertions, and sends his fleet to the *Portus Itius*. The exact spot which Cæsar called by this name the geographers have not identified, but it is supposed to be between Boulogne and Calais. It may probably have been at *Wissant*. Having seen that things were thus ready for a second trip into Britain, he turns round and hurries off with four legions and eight hundred cavalry,—an army of 25,000 men,—into the *Treves* country. There is a quarrel going on there between two chieftains which it is well that he should settle,—somewhat as the monkey settled the contest about the oyster. This, however, is a mere nothing of an affair, and he is back again among his ships at the *Portus Itius* in a page and a half.

He resolves upon taking five legions of his own

soldiers into Britain, and two thousand mounted Gauls. He had brought together four thousand of these horsemen, collected from all Gaul, their chiefs and nobles, not only as fighting allies, but as hostages that the tribes should not rise in rebellion while his back was turned. These he divides, taking half with him, and leaving half with three legions of his own men, under Labienus, in the Boulogne country, as a base to his army, to look after the provisions, and to see that he be not harassed on his return. There is a little affair, however, with one of the Gaulish chieftains, Dumnorix the Æduan, who ought to have been his fastest friend. Dumnorix runs away with all the Æduan horsemen. Cæsar, however, sends after him and has him killed, and then all things are ready. He starts with altogether more than 800 ships at sunset, and comes over with a gentle south-west wind. He arrives off the coast of Britain at about noon, but can see none of the inhabitants on the cliff. He imagines that they have all fled, frightened by the number of his ships. Cæsar establishes his camp, and proceeds that same night about twelve miles into the country, —eleven miles, we may say, as our mile is longer than the Roman,—and there he finds the Britons. There is some fighting, after which Cæsar returns and fortifies his camp. Then there comes a storm and knocks his ships about terribly,—although he had found, as he thought, a nice soft place for them. But the tempest is very violent, and they are torn away from their anchors, and thrust upon the shore, and dashed against each other till there is infinite trouble. He is obliged

to send over to Labienus, telling him to build more ships ; and those which are left he drags up over the shore to his camp, in spite of the enormous labour required in doing it. He is ten days at this work, night and day, and we may imagine that his soldiers had not an easy time of it. When this has been done, he advances again into the country after the enemy, and finds that Cassivellaunus is in command of the united forces of the different tribes. Cassivellaunus comes from the other side of the Thames, over in Middlesex or Hertfordshire. The Britons had not hitherto lived very peaceably together, but now they agree that against the Romans they will act in union under Cassivellaunus.

Cæsar's description of the island is very interesting. The interior is inhabited by natives, — or rather by "aborigines." Cæsar states this at least as the tradition of the country. But the maritime parts are held by Belgian immigrants, who, for the most part, have brought with them from the Continent the names of their tribes. The population is great, and the houses, built very like the houses in Gaul, are numerous and very thick together. The Britons have a great deal of cattle. They use money, having either copper coin or iron rings of a great weight. Tin is found in the middle of the island, and, about the coast, iron. But the quantity of iron found is small. Brass they import. They have the same timber as in Gaul,—only they have neither beech nor fir. Hares and chickens and geese they think it wrong to eat ; but they keep these animals as pets. The climate, on the whole, is milder than in Gaul. The island is triangular. One

corner, that of Kent, has an eastern and a southern aspect. This southern side of the island he makes 500 miles, exceeding the truth by about 150 miles. Then Cæsar becomes a little hazy in his geography,—telling us that the other side, meaning the western line of the triangle, where Ireland lies, verges towards Spain. Ireland, he says, is half the size of Britain, and about the same distance from it that Britain is from Gaul. In the middle of the channel dividing Ireland from Britain there is an island called Mona,—the Isle of Man. There are also some other islands which at midwinter have thirty continuous days of night. Here Cæsar becomes not only hazy but mythic. But he explains that he has seen nothing of this himself, although he has ascertained, by scientific measurement, that the nights in Britain are shorter than on the Continent. Of course the nights are shorter with us in summer than they are in Italy, and longer in winter. The western coast he makes out to be 700 miles long; in saying which he is nearly 100 miles over the mark. The third side he describes as looking towards the north. He means the eastern coast. This he calls 800 miles long, and exaggerates our territories by more than 200 miles. The marvel, however, is that he should be so near the truth. The men of Kent are the most civilised: indeed they are almost as good as Gauls in this respect! What changes does not time make in the comparative merits of countries! The men in the interior live on flesh and milk, and do not care for corn. They wear skin clothing. They make themselves horrible with woad, and go about with very long hair.

They shave close, except the head and upper lip. Then comes the worst habit of all ;—ten or a dozen men have their wives in common between them.

We have a very vivid and by no means unflattering account of the singular agility of our ancestors in their mode of fighting from their chariots. “This,” says Cæsar, “is the nature of their chariot-fighting. They first drive rapidly about the battle-field,—“*per omnes partes*,”—and throw their darts, and frequently disorder the ranks by the very terror occasioned by the horses and by the noise of the wheels ; and when they have made their way through the bodies of the cavalry, they jump down and fight on foot. Then the charioteers go a little out of the battle, and so place their chariots that they may have a ready mode of returning should their friends be pressed by the number of their enemies. Thus they unite the rapidity of cavalry and the stability of infantry ; and so effective do they become by daily use and practice, that they are accustomed to keep their horses, excited as they are, on their legs on steep and precipitous ground, and to manage and turn them very quickly, and to run along the pole and stand upon the yoke,”—by which the horses were held together at the collars,—“and again with the greatest rapidity to return to the chariot.”* All which is very wonderful.

Of course there is a great deal of fighting, and the

* All well-instructed modern Britons have learned from the old authorities that the Briton war-chariots were furnished with scythes attached to the axles,—from Pomponius Mela, the Roman geographer, and from Mrs Markham, among others. And Eugene Sue, in his novel translated into English under the name of the ‘*Rival Races*,’ explains how the Bretons on the other side of

Britons soon learn by experience to avoid general engagements and maintain guerilla actions. Cæsar by degrees makes his way to the Thames, and with great difficulty gets his army over it. He can only do this at one place, and that badly. The site of this ford he does not describe to us. It is supposed to have been near the place which we now know as Sunbury. He does tell us that his men were so deep in the water that their heads only were above the stream. But even thus they were so impetuous in their onslaught, that the Britons would not wait for them on the opposite bank, but ran away. Soon there come unconditional surrender, and hostages, and promises of tribute. Cassivellaunus, who is himself but a usurper, and therefore has many enemies at home, endeavours to make himself secure in a strong place or town, which is supposed to have been on or near the site of our St Albans. Cæsar, however, explains that the poor Britons give the name of a town,—“oppidum,”—to a spot in which they have merely surrounded some thick woods with a ditch and rampart. Cæsar, of course, drives them out of their woodland fortress, and then there quickly follows another surrender, more hostages, and the demand for tribute. Cæsar leaves his orders behind him, as though to speak were to be obeyed. One Mandubratius, and not Cassivellaunus, the water, in the Morbihan, used these scythes ; and how, before a battle with Cæsar’s legions, the wives of the warriors arranged the straps so that the scythes might be worked from the chariot like oars from a boat. But Cæsar says nothing of such scythes, and surely he would have done so had he seen them. The reader must choose between Cæsar’s silence and the authority of Pomponius Mela, Mrs Markham, and Eugene Sue.

is to be the future king in Middlesex and Hertfordshire,—that is, over the Trinobantes who live there. He fixes the amount of tribute to be sent annually by the Britons to Rome; and he especially leaves orders that Cassivellaunus shall do no mischief to the young Mandubratius. Then he crosses back into Gaul at two trips,—his ships taking half the army first and coming back for the other half; and he piously observes that though he had lost many ships when they were comparatively empty, hardly one had been destroyed while his soldiers were in them.

So was ended Cæsar's second and last invasion of Britain. That he had reduced Britain as he had reduced Gaul he certainly could not boast;—though Quintus Cicero had written to his brother to say that Britannia was,—“*confecta*,”—finished. Though he had twice landed his army under the white cliffs, and twice taken it away with comparative security, he had on both occasions been made to feel how terribly strong an ally to the Britons was that channel which divided them from the Continent. The reader is made to feel that on both occasions the existence of his army and of himself is in the greatest peril. Cæsar's idea in attacking Britain was probably rather that of making the Gauls believe that his power could reach even beyond them,—could extend itself all round them, even into distant islands,—than of absolutely establishing the Roman dominion beyond that distant sea. The Britons had helped the Gauls in their wars with him, and it was necessary that he should punish any who presumed to give such help. Whether the orders which

he left behind him were obeyed we do not know ; but we may imagine that the tribute exacted was not sent to Rome with great punctuality. In fact, Cæsar invaded the island twice, but did not reduce it.

On his return to Gaul, nearly at the close of the summer, he found himself obliged to distribute his army about the country because of a great scarcity of provisions. There had been a drought, and the crops had failed. Hitherto he had kept his army together during the winter ; now he was obliged to divide his legions, placing one with one tribe, and another with another. A legion and a half he stations under two of his generals, L. Titurius Sabinus, and L. Aurunculeius Cotta, among the Eburones, who live on the banks of the Meuse in the Liege and Namur country,—a very stout people, who are still much averse to the dominion of Rome. In this way he thought he might best get over that difficulty as to the scarcity of provisions ; but yet he so well understood the danger of separating his army, that he is careful to tell us that, with the exception of one legion which he had stationed in a very quiet country,—among the Essui, where Alençon now stands,—they were all within a hundred miles of each other. Nevertheless, in spite of this precaution, there now fell upon Cæsar the greatest calamity which he had ever yet suffered in war.

During all these campaigns, the desire of the Gauls to free themselves from the power and the tyranny of Rome never ceased ; nor did their intention to do so ever fade away. Cæsar must have been to them as a venomous blight, or some evil divinity sent to afflict them for causes which they could not understand.

There were tribes who truckled to him, but he had no real friends among them. If any Gauls could have loved him, the Ædui should have done so ; but that Dumnorix, the Æduan, who ran away with the horsemen of his tribe when he was wanted to help in the invasion of Britain, had, before he was killed, tried to defend himself, asserting vociferously that he was a free man and belonging to a free state. He had failed to understand that, in being admitted to the alliance of Cæsar, he was bound to obey Cæsar. Cæsar speaks of it all with his godlike simplicity, as though he saw nothing ungodlike in the work he was doing. There was no touch of remorse in him, as he ordered men to be slaughtered and villages to be burned. He was able to look at those things as trifles,—as parts of a great whole. He felt no more than does the gentleman who sends the sheep out of his park to be slaughtered at the appointed time. When he seems to be most cruel, it is for the sake of example,—that some politic result may follow,—that Gauls may know, and Italians know also, that they must bow the knee to Cæsar. But the heart of the reader is made to bleed as he sees the unavailing struggles of the tribes. One does not specially love the Ædui ; but Dumnorix protesting that he will not return, that he is a free man, of a free state, and then being killed, is a man to be loved. Among the Carnutes, where Chartres now stands, Cæsar has set up a pet king, one Tasgetius ; but when Cæsar is away in Britain, the Carnutes kill Tasgetius. They will have no pet of Cæsar's. And now the stout Eburones, who have two kings of their cwn over them, Ambiorix and Cativolcus, understanding that Cæsar's dif-

difficulty is their opportunity, attack the Roman camp, with its legion and a half of men under Titurius and Cotta.

Ambiorix, the chieftain, is very crafty. He persuades the Roman generals to send ambassadors to him, and to these he tells his story. He himself, Ambiorix, loves Cæsar beyond all things. Has not Cæsar done him great kindnesses? He would not willingly lift a hand against Cæsar, but he cannot control his state. The facts, however, are thus; an enormous body of Germans has crossed the Rhine, and is hurrying on to destroy that Roman camp; and it certainly will be destroyed, so great is the number of the Germans. Thus says Ambiorix; and then suggests whether it would not be well that Titurius and Cotta with their nine or ten thousand men,—a mere handful of men against all these Germans who are already over the Rhine;—would it not be well that the Romans should go and join some of their brethren, either the legion that is among the Nervii to the east, under Quintus Cicero, the brother of the great orator—or that other legion which Labienus has, a little to the south, on the borders of the Remi and Treviri? And in regard to a good turn on his own part, so great is the love and veneration which he, Ambiorix, feels for Cæsar, that he is quite ready to see the Romans safe through the territories of the Eburones. He begs Titurius and Cotta to think of this, and to allow him to aid them in their escape while escape is possible. The two Roman generals do think of it. Titurius thinks that it will be well to take the advice of Ambiorix. Cotta, and with him many of the tribunes and centurions of the soldiers, think that they should not stir without Cæsar's orders;—

think also that there is nothing baser or more foolish in warfare than to act on advice given by an enemy. Titurius, however, is clear for going, and Cotta, after much argument and some invective, gives way. Early or the next morning they all leave their camp, taking with them their baggage, and marching forth as though through a friendly country,—apparently with belief in the proffered friendship of Ambiorix. The Eburones had of course prepared an ambush, and the Roman army is attacked both behind and before, and is thrown into utter confusion.

The legion, or legion and a half, with its two commanders, is altogether destroyed. Titurius goes out from his ranks to meet Ambiorix, and pray for peace. He is told to throw away his arms, and submitting to the disgrace, casts them down. Then, while Ambiorix is making a long speech, the Roman general is surrounded and slaughtered. Cotta is killed fighting; as also are more than half the soldiers. The rest get back into the camp at night, and then, despairing of any safety, overwhelmed with disgrace, conscious that there is no place for hope, they destroy themselves. Only a few have escaped during the fighting to tell the tale in the camp of Labienus.

As a rule the reader's sympathies are with the Gauls; but we cannot help feeling a certain regret that a Roman legion should have thus been wiled on to destruction through the weakness of its general. If Titurius could have been made to suffer alone we should bear it better. When we are told how the gallant eagle-bearer, Petrosidius, throws his eagle into the rampart, and then dies fighting before the camp, we wish

that Ambiorix had been less successful. Of this, however, we feel quite certain, that there will come a day, and that soon, in which Cæsar will exact punishment.

Having done so much, Ambiorix and the Eburones do not desist. Now, if ever, after so great a disgrace, and with legions still scattered, may Cæsar be worsted. Q. Cicero is with his legion among the Nervii, and thither Ambiorix goes. The Nervii are quite ready, and Cicero is attacked in his camp. And here, too, for a long while it goes very badly with the Romans ;—so badly that Cicero is hardly able to hold his ramparts against the attacks made upon them by the barbarians. Red-hot balls of clay and hot arrows are thrown into the camp, and there is a fire. The messengers sent to Cæsar for help are slain on the road, and the Romans begin to think that there is hardly a chance for them of escape. Unless Cæsar be with them they are not safe. All their power, their prestige, their certainty of conquest, lies in Cæsar. Cicero behaves like a prudent and a valiant man ; but unless he had at last succeeded in getting a Gaulish slave to take a letter concealed in a dart to Cæsar, the enemy **would** have destroyed him.

There is a little episode of two Roman centurions, Pulfius and Varenus, who were always quarrelling as to which was the better man of the two. Pulfius with much bravado rushes out among the enemy, and Varenus follows him. Pulfius gets into trouble, and Varenus rescues him. Then Varenus is in a difficulty, and Pulfius comes to his assistance. According to all chances of war, both should have been killed ; but both get back safe into the camp ;—and nobody knows **from** that day to this which was the better man.

Cæsar, of course, hastens to the assistance of his lieutenant, having sent word of his coming by a letter fastened to another dart, which, however, hardly reaches Cicero in time to comfort him before he sees the fires by which the coming legions wasted the country along their line of march. Then there is more fighting. Cæsar conquers, and Q. Cicero is rescued from his very disagreeable position. Labienus has also been in difficulty, stationed, as we remember, on the borders of the Treviri. The Treviri were quite as eager to attack him as the Eburones and Nervii to destroy the legions left in their territories. But before the attack is made, the news of Cæsar's victory, traveling with wonderful speed, is heard of in those parts, and the Treviri think it best to leave Labienus alone.

But Cæsar has perceived that, although he has so often boasted that all Gaul was at last at peace, all Gaul is prepared to carry on the war against him. It is during this winter that he seems to realize a conviction that his presence in the country is not popular with the Gauls in general, and that he has still much to do before he can make them understand that they are not free men, belonging to free states. The opposition to him has become so general that he himself determines to remain in Gaul all the winter; and even after telling us of the destruction of Indutiomarus, the chief of the Treviri, by Labienus, he can only boast that—"Cæsar had, after that was done, Gaul a little quieter,"—a little more like a subject country bound hand and foot,—than it was before. During this year Cæsar's proconsular power over his provinces was extended for a second period of five years.

CHAPTER VII.

**SIXTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—CÆSAR PURSUES AMBIORIX.
—THE MANNERS OF THE GAULS AND OF THE GERMAN ARE
CONTRASTED.—B.C. 53.**

CÆSAR begins the next campaign before the winter is over, having, as we have seen, been forced to continue the last long after the winter had commenced. The Gauls were learning to unite themselves, and things were becoming very serious with him. One Roman army, with probably ten thousand men, had been absolutely destroyed, with its generals Titurius Sabinus and Aurunculeius Cotta. Another under Quintus Cicero would have suffered the same fate, but for Cæsar's happy intervention. A third under Labienus had been attacked. All Gaul had been under arms, or thinking of arms, in the autumn; and though Cæsar had been able to report at the end of the campaign that Gaul,—his Gaul, as he intended that it should be,—was a little quieter, nevertheless he understood well that he still had his work to do before he could enter upon possession. He had already been the master of eight legions in Gaul, containing 48,000 foot-soldiers, levied on the Italian side of the Alps. He

had added to this a large body of Gaulish cavalry and light infantry, over and above his eight legions. He had now lost an entire legion and a half, besides the gaps which must have been made in Britain, and by the loss of those who had fallen when attacked under Cicero by the Nervii. But he would show the Gauls that when so treated he could begin again, not only with renewed but with increased force. He would astound them by his display of Roman power, "thinking that, for the future, it would greatly affect the opinion of Gaul that the power of Italy should be seen to be so great that, if any reverse in war were suffered, not only could the injury be cured in a short time, but that the loss could be repaired even by increased forces." He not only levies fresh troops, but borrows a legion which Pompey commands outside the walls of Rome. He tells us that Pompey yields his legion to the "Republic and to Friendship." The Triumvirate was still existing, and Cæsar's great colleague probably felt that he had no alternative. In this way Cæsar not only re-established the legion which had been annihilated, but completes the others, and takes the field with two new legions added to his army. He probably now had as many as eighty thousand men under his command.

He first makes a raid against our old friends the Nervii, who had nearly conquered Cicero before Christmas, and who were already conspiring again with certain German and neighbouring Belgian tribes. The reader will perhaps remember that in the second book this tribe was said to have been so utterly de-

stroyed that hardly their name remained. That, no doubt, was Cæsar's belief after the great slaughter. There had been, however, enough of them left nearly to destroy Q. Cicero and his legion. Then Cæsar goes to Paris,—Lutetia Parisiorum, of which we now hear for the first time,—and, with the help of his friends the Ædui and the Remi, makes a peace with the centre tribes of Gaul, the Senones and Carnutes. Then he resolves upon attacking Ambiorix with all his heart and soul. Ambiorix had destroyed his legion and killed his two generals, and against Ambiorix he must put forth all his force. It is said that when Cæsar first heard of that misfortune he swore that he would not cut his hair or shave himself till he was avenged. But he feels that he must first dispose of those who would naturally be the allies of this much-to-be-persecuted enemy. The Menapii, with whom we may remember that he had never quite settled matters in his former war, and who live on the southern banks of the Meuse not far from the sea, have not even yet sent to him messengers to ask for peace. He burns their villages, takes their cattle, makes slaves of the men, and then binds them by hostages to have no friendship with Ambiorix. In the mean time Labienus utterly defeats the great north-eastern tribe, the Treviri, whom he cunningly allures into fighting just before they are joined by certain Germans who are coming to aid them. “*Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*” These unfortunate Gauls and Germans fall into every trap that is laid for them. The speech which Cæsar quotes

as having been made by Labienus to his troops on this occasion is memorable. "Now," says Labienus, "you have your opportunity. You have got your enemy thoroughly at advantage. That valour which you have so often displayed before the 'Imperator,' Cæsar, display now under my command. Think that Cæsar is present, and that he beholds you." To have written thus of himself Cæsar must have thought of himself as of a god. He tells the story as though it were quite natural that Labienus and the soldiers should so regard him.

After this battle, in which the Treviri are of course slaughtered, Cæsar makes a second bridge over the Rhine, somewhat above the spot at which he had crossed before. He does this, he says, for two reasons,—first, because the Germans had sent assistance to the Nervii; and secondly, lest his great enemy Ambiorix should find shelter among the Suevi. Then he suggests that the opportunity is a good one for saying something to his readers of the different manners of Gaul and of Germany. Among the Gauls, in their tribes, their villages, and even in their families, there are ever two factions, so that one should always balance the other, and neither become superior. Cæsar so tells us at this particular point of his narrative, because he is anxious to go back and explain how it was that he had taken the part of the Ædui, and had first come into conflict with the Germans, driving Ariovistus back across the Rhine for their sake. In eastern Gaul two tribes had long balanced each other, each, of course, striving for mastery,—the Ædui and

the Sequani. The Sequani had called in the aid of the Germans, and the Ædui had been very hardly treated. In their sufferings they had appealed to Rome, having had former relations of close amity with the Republic. Divitiacus, their chief magistrate,—the brother of Dumnorix who was afterwards killed by Cæsar's order for running away with the Æduan cavalry before the second invasion of Britain,—had lived for a while in Rome, and had enjoyed Roman friendships, that of Cicero among others. There was a good deal of doubt in Rome as to what should be done with these Ædui; but at last, as we know, Cæsar decided on taking their part; and we know also how he drove Ariovistus back into Germany, with the loss of his wives and daughters. Thus it came to pass, Cæsar tells us, that the Ædui were accounted first of all the Gauls in regard to friendship with Rome; while the Remi, who came to his assistance so readily when the Belgians were in arms against him, were allowed the second place.

Among the Gauls there are, he says, two classes of men held in honour,—the Druids and the knights; by which we understand that two professions or modes of life, and two only, were open to the nobility,—the priesthood and the army. All the common people, Cæsar says, are serfs, or little better. They do not hesitate, when oppressed by debt or taxation, or the fear of some powerful enemy, to give themselves into slavery, loving the protection so obtained. The Druids have the chief political authority, and can maintain it by the dreadful power of excommunication. The excom-

municated wretch is an outlaw, beyond the pale of civil rights. Over the Druids is one great Druid, at whose death the place is filled by election among all the Druids, unless there be one so conspicuously first that no ceremony of election is needed. Their most sacred spot for worship is among the Carnutes, in the middle of the country. Their discipline and mysteries came to them from Britain, and when any very knotty point arises they go to Britain to make inquiry. The Druids don't fight, and pay no taxes. The ambition to be a Druid is very great; but then so is the difficulty. Twenty years of tuition is not uncommonly needed; for everything has to be learned by heart. Of their religious secrets nothing may be written. Their great doctrine is the transmigration of souls; so that men should believe that the soul never dies, and that death, therefore, or that partial death which we see, need not be feared. They are great also in astronomy, geography, natural history,—and general theology, of course.

The knights, or nobles, have no resource but to fight. Cæsar suggests that before the blessing of his advent they were driven to the disagreeable necessity of fighting yearly with each other. Of all people the Gauls, he says, are the most given to superstition; in so much so, that in all dangers and difficulties they have recourse to human sacrifices, in which the Druids are their ministers. They burn their victims to appease their deities, and, by preference, will burn thieves and murderers,—the gods loving best such polluted victims,—but, in default of such, will have

recourse to an immolation of innocents. Then Cæsar tells us that among the gods they chiefly worship Mercury, whom they seem to have regarded as the cleverest of the gods; but they also worship Apollo, Mars, Jove, and Minerva, ascribing to them the attributes which are allowed them by other nations. How the worship of the Greek and Roman gods became mingled with the religion of the Druids we are not told, nor does Cæsar express surprise that it should have been so. Cæsar gives the Roman names of these gods, but he does not intend us to understand that they were so called by the Gauls, who had their own names for their deities. The trophies of war they devote to Mars, and in many states keep large stores of such consecrated spoils. It is not often that a Gaul will commit the sacrilege of appropriating to his own use anything thus made sacred; but the punishment of such offence, when it is committed, is death by torture. There is the greatest veneration from sons to their fathers. Until the son can bear arms he does not approach his father, or even stand in public in his presence. The husband's fortune is made to equal the wife's dowry, and then the property is common between them. This seems well enough, and the law would suit the views of British wives of the present day. But the next Gaulish custom is not so well worthy of example. Husbands have the power of life and death over their wives and children; and when any man of mark dies, if there be cause for suspicion, his wives are examined under torture, and if any evil practice be confessed, they

are then tortured to death. We learn from this passage that polygamy was allowed among the Gauls. The Gauls have grand funerals. Things which have been dear to the departed are burned at these ceremonies. Animals were thus burned in Cæsar's time, but in former days slaves also, and dependants who had been specially loved. The best-governed states are very particular in not allowing rumours as to state affairs to be made matter of public discussion. Anything heard is to be told to the magistrate; but there is to be no discussion on public affairs except in the public council. So much we hear of the customs of the Gauls.

The Germans differ from the Gauls in many things. They know nothing of Druids, nor do they care for sacrifices. They worship only what they see and enjoy,—the sun, and fire, and the moon. They spend their time in hunting and war, and care little for agriculture. They live on milk, cheese, and flesh. They are communists as to the soil, and stay no longer than a year on the same land. These customs they follow lest they should learn to prefer agriculture to war; lest they should grow fond of broad possessions, so that the rich should oppress the poor; lest they should by too much comfort become afraid of cold and heat; lest the love of money should grow among them, and one man should seek to be higher than another. From all which it seems that the Germans were not without advanced ideas in political economy.

It is a great point with the Germans to have no near neighbours. For the sake of safety and inde-

pendence, each tribe loves to have a wide margin. In war the chieftains have power of life and death. In time of peace there are no appointed magistrates, but the chiefs in the cantons declare justice and quell litigation as well as they can. Thieving in a neighbouring state,—not in his own,—is honourable to a German. Expeditions for thieving are formed, which men may join or not as they please; but woe betide him who, having promised, fails. They are good to travelling strangers. There was a time when the Gauls were better men than the Germans, and could come into Germany and take German land. Even now, says Cæsar, there are Gaulish tribes living in Germany after German fashion. But the nearness of the Province to Gaul has taught the Gauls luxury, and so it has come to pass that the Gauls are not as good in battle as they used to be. It is interesting to gather from all these notices the progress of civilisation through the peoples of Europe, and some hint as to what has been thought to be good and bad for humanity by various races before the time of Christ.

Cæsar then tells us of a great Hercynian forest, beginning from the north of Switzerland and stretching away to the Danube. A man in nine days would traverse its breadth; but even in sixty days a man could not get to the end of it lengthwise. We may presume that the Black Forest was a portion of it. It contains many singular beasts,—bisons with one horn; elks, which are like great stags, but which have no joints in their legs, and cannot lie down,—nor, if

knocked down, can they get up,—which sleep leaning against trees; but the trees sometimes break, and then the elk falls and has a bad time of it. Then there is the urus, almost as big as an elephant, which spares neither man nor beast. It is a great thing to kill a urus, but no one can tame them, even when young. The Germans are fond of mounting the horns of this animal with silver, and using them for drinking-cups.

Cæsar does very little over among the Germans. He comes back, partly destroys his bridge, and starts again in search of Ambiorix. His lieutenant Basilus nearly takes the poor hunted chieftain, but Ambiorix escapes, and Cæsar moralises about fortune. Ambiorix, the reader will remember, was joint-king over the Eburones with one Cativolcus. Cativolcus, who is old, finding how his people are harassed, curses his brother king who has brought these sorrows on the nation, and poisons himself with the juice of yew-tree.

All the tribes in the Belgic country, Gauls as well as Germans, were now very much harassed. They all had helped, or might have helped, or, if left to themselves, might at some future time give help to Ambiorix and the Eburones. Cæsar divides his army, but still goes himself in quest of his victim into the damp, uncomfortable countries near the mouths of the Scheldt and Meuse. Here he is much distracted between his burning desire to extirpate that race of wicked men over whom Ambiorix had been king, and his anxiety lest he should lose more of his own men in the work

than the wicked race is worth. He invites the neighbouring Gauls to help him in the work, so that Gauls should perish in those inhospitable regions rather than his own legionaries. This, however, is fixed in his mind, that a tribe which has been guilty of so terrible an offence,—which has destroyed in war an army of his, just as he would have delighted to destroy a Gaulish army,—must be extirpated, so that its very name may cease to exist ! “*Pro tali facinore, stirps ac nomen civitatis tollatur.*”

Cæsar, in dividing his army, had stationed Q. Cicero with one legion and the heavy baggage and spoils of the army, in a fortress exactly at that spot from which Titurius Sabinus had been lured by the craft of Ambiorix. Certain Germans, the Sigambri, having learned that all the property of the Eburones had been given up by Cæsar as a prey to any who would take it, had crossed the Rhine that they might thus fill their hands. But it is suggested to them that they may fill their hands much fuller by attacking Q. Cicero in his camp ; and they do attack him, when the best part of his army is away looking for provisions. That special spot in the territory of the Eburones is again nearly fatal to a Roman legion. But the Germans, not knowing how to press the advantage they gain, return with their spoil across the Rhine, and Cæsar again comes up like a god. But he has not as yet destroyed Ambiorix,—who indeed is not taken at last,—and expresses his great disgust and amazement that the coming of these Germans, which was planned with the view of injuring Ambiorix,

should have done instead so great a service to that monstrously wicked chieftain.

He does his very best to catch Ambiorix in person, offering great rewards and inducing his men to undergo all manner of hardships in the pursuit. Ambiorix, however, with three or four chosen followers, escapes him. But Cæsar is not without revenge. He burns all the villages of the Eburones, and all their houses. He so lays waste the country that even when his army is gone not a soul should be able to live there. After that he probably allowed himself to be shaved. Ambiorix is seen here and is seen there, but with hairbreadth chances eludes his pursuer. Cæsar, having thus failed, returns south, as winter approaches, to Rheims,—Durocortorum; and just telling us in four words how he had one Acco tortured to death because Acco had headed a conspiracy in the middle of Gaul among the Carnutes and Senones, and how he outlawed and banished others whom he could not catch, he puts his legions into winter quarters, and again goes back to Italy to hold assizes and look after his interests amid the great affairs of the Republic.

CHAPTER VIII.

SEVENTH BOOK OF THE WAR IN GAUL.—THE REVOLT OF VERCINGETORIX.—B.C. 52.

IN opening his account of his seventh campaign Cæsar makes almost the only reference to the affairs of Rome which we find in these memoirs. Clodius has been murdered. We know, too, that Crassus had been killed at the head of his army in the east, and that, at the death of Clodius, Pompey had been created Dictator in the city with the name of sole Consul. Cæsar, however, only mentions the murder of Clodius, and then goes on to say that the Gauls, knowing how important to him must be the affairs of Rome at this moment, think that he cannot now attend to them, and that, in his absence, they may shake off the Roman yoke. The affairs of Rome must indeed have been important to Cæsar, if, as no doubt is true, he had already before his eyes a settled course of action by which to make himself supreme in the Republic. Clodius, the demagogue, was dead, whom he never could have loved, but whom it had not suited him to treat as an enemy. Crassus, too, was dead, whom, on account of his wealth, Cæsar had admitted as a colleague. Pompey, the third triumvir,

remained at Rome, and was now sole Consul; Pompey who, only twelve months since, had so fondly given up his legion for the sake of the Republic,—and for friendship. Cæsar, no doubt, foresaw by this time that the struggle must be at last between himself and Pompey. The very forms of the old republican rule were being turned adrift, and Cæsar must have known, as Pompey also knew, and Clodius had known, and even Crassus, that a new power would become paramount in the city. But the hands to wrest such power must be very strong. And the day had not yet quite come. Having spent six summers in subduing Gaul, Cæsar would not lose the prestige, the power, the support, which such a territory, really subdued, would give him. Things, doubtless, were important at Rome, but it was still his most politic course to return over the Alps and complete his work. Before the winter was over he heard that the tribes were conspiring, because it was thought that at such an emergency Cæsar could not leave Italy.

This last book of the *Commentary*, as written by Cæsar, tells the story of the gallant Vercingetorix, one of the Arverni,—the modern Auvergne,—whose father, Celtillus, is said to have sought the chieftainship of all Gaul, and to have been killed on that account by his own state. Vercingetorix is certainly the hero of these wars on the Gaulish side, though we hear nothing of him till this seventh campaign. The conspiracy against Rome is afloat, the Carnutes, whose chief town is Genabum,—Orleans,—having commenced it. Vercingetorix excites his own countrymen to join, but is expelled from

their town, Gergovia, for the attempt. The Arverni, or at least their chief men, fear to oppose the Romans; but Vercingetorix obtains a crowd of followers out in the country, and perseveres. Men of other tribes come to him, from as far north as Paris, and west from the Ocean. He assumes supreme power, and enacts and carries out most severe laws for his guidance during the war. For any greater offence he burns the offender alive and subjects him to all kinds of torments. For any small fault he cuts off a man's ears, pokes out one of his eyes, and sends him home, that he may be an example visible to all men. By threats of such punishment to those who do not join him, and by inflicting such on those who do and are then untrue to him or lukewarm, he gets together a great army. Cæsar, who is still in Italy, hears of all this, and having made things comfortable with Pompey, hurries into the province. He tells us of his great difficulty in joining his army,—of the necessity which is incumbent on him of securing even the Roman Province from invasion, and of the manner in which he breaks through snow-clad mountains, the Cevennes, at a time of the year in which such mountains were supposed to be impassable. He is forced into fighting before the winter is over, because, unless he does so, the few friends he has in Gaul,—the Ædui, for instance,—will have been gained over by the enemy. This made it very difficult, Cæsar tells us, for him to know what to do; but he decides that he must begin his campaign, though it be winter still.

Cæsar, moving his army about with wonderful quickness, takes three towns in the centre of Gaul, of which

Genabum, Orleans, is the first, and thus provides himself with food. Vercingetorix, when he hears of these losses, greatly troubled in his mind that Cæsar should thus be enabled to exist on the provisions gathered by the Gauls, determines to burn all the Gaulish towns in those parts. He tells his people that there is nothing else for them in their present emergency, and that they must remember when they see their hearths smoking and their property destroyed, that it would be, or ought to be, much more grievous for them to know that their wives and children would become slaves, as undoubtedly would be their fate, if Cæsar were allowed to prevail. The order is given. Twenty cities belonging to one tribe are burned to the ground. The same thing is done in other states. But there is one very beautiful city, the glory of the country round, which can, they say, be so easily defended that it will be a comfort rather than a peril to them. Avaricum, the present Bourges,—must that also be burned? May not Avaricum be spared? Vercingetorix is all for burning Avaricum as he has burned the others; but he allows himself to be persuaded, and the city is spared—for the time.

Cæsar, of course, determines to take Avaricum; but he encounters great difficulties. The cattle have been driven away. There is no corn. Those wretched *Ædui* do almost nothing for him; and the *Boii*, who are their neighbours, and who, at the best, are but a poor scanty people, are equally unserviceable. Some days his army is absolutely without food; but yet no word of complaint is heard “unworthy of the majesty

and former victories of the Roman people." The soldiers even beg him to continue the siege when he offers to raise it because of the hardships they are enduring. Let them endure anything, they say, but failure! "Moreover Cæsar, when he would accost his legions one by one at their work, and would tell them that he would raise the siege if they could but ill bear their privations, was implored by all of them not to do that. They said that for many years under his command they had so well done their duty that they had undergone no disgrace, had never quitted their ground leaving aught unfinished,"—except the subjugation of Britain they might perhaps have said,—"that they would be now disgraced if they should raise a siege which had been commenced; that they would rather bear all hardships than not avenge the Roman citizens who had perished at Genabum by the perfidy of the Gauls." Cæsar puts these words into the mouths of his legionaries, and as we read them we believe that such was the existing spirit of the men. Cæsar's soldiers now had learned better than to cry because they were afraid of their enemies.

Then we hear that Vercingetorix is in trouble with the Gauls. The Gauls, when they see the Romans so near them, think that they are to be betrayed into Cæsar's hands, and they accuse their leader. But Vercingetorix makes them a speech, and brings up certain Roman prisoners to give evidence as to the evil condition of the Roman army. Vercingetorix swears that these prisoners are soldiers from the Roman legions, and so settles that little trouble; but Cæsar.

defending his legionaries, asserts that the men so used were simply slaves.

Vercingetorix is in his camp at some little distance from Avaricum, while Cæsar is determined to take the city. We have the description of the siege, concise, graphic, and clear. We are told of the nature of the walls; how the Gauls were good at mining and countermining; how they flung hot pitch and boiling grease on the invaders; how this was kept up, one Gaul after another stepping on to the body of his dying comrade; how at last they resolved to quit the town and make their way by night to the camp of Vercingetorix, but were stopped by the prayers of their own women, who feared Cæsar's mercies;—and how at last the city was taken. We cannot but execrate Cæsar when he tells us coolly of the result. They were all killed. The old, the women, and the children, perished altogether, slaughtered by the Romans. Out of forty thousand inhabitants, Cæsar says that about eight hundred got safely to Vercingetorix. Of course we doubt the accuracy of Cæsar's figures when he tells us of the numbers of the Gauls; but we do not doubt that but a few escaped, and that all but a few were slaughtered. When, during the last campaign, the Gauls at Genabum (Orleans) had determined on revolt against Cæsar, certain Roman traders—usurers for the most part, who had there established themselves—were killed. Cæsar gives this as the cause, and sufficient cause, for the wholesale slaughter of women and children! One reflects that not otherwise, perhaps, could he have conquered Gaul, and that Gaul

had to be conquered ; but we cannot for the moment but abhor the man capable of such work. Vercingetorix bears his loss bravely. He reminds the Gauls that had they taken his advice the city would have been destroyed by themselves and not defended ; he tells them that all the states of Gaul are now ready to join him ; and he prepares to fortify a camp after the Roman fashion. Hitherto the Gauls have fought either from behind the walls of towns, or out in the open country without other protection than that of the woods and hills.

Then there is another episode with those unsatisfactory *Ædui*. There is a quarrel among them who shall be their chief magistrate,—a certain old man or a certain young man,—and they send to Cæsar to settle the question. Cæsar's hands are very full ; but, as he explains, it is essential to him that his allies shall be kept in due subordinate order. He therefore absolutely goes in person to one of their cities, and decides that the young man shall be the chief magistrate. But, as he seldom does anything for nothing, he begs that ten thousand *Æduan* infantry and all the *Æduan* cavalry may be sent to help him against Vercingetorix. The *Ædui* have no alternative but to comply. Their compliance, however, is not altogether of a friendly nature. The old man who has been put out of the magistracy gets hold of the *Æduan* general of the forces ; and the *Æduan* army takes the field,—to help, not Cæsar, but Vercingetorix ! There is a large amount of lying and treachery among the *Ædui*, and of course tidings of what is going on are carried to Cæsar. Over

and over again these people deceive him, betray him, and endeavour to injure his cause ; but he always forgives them, or pretends to forgive them. It is his policy to show to the Gauls how great can be the friendship and clemency of Cæsar. If he would have burned the Ædui and spared Bourges we should have liked him better ; but then, had he done so, he would not have been Cæsar.

While Cæsar is thus troubled with his allies, he has trouble enough also with his enemies. Vercingetorix, with his followers, after that terrible reverse at Avaricum,—Bourges,—goes into his own country which we know as Auvergne, and there encamps his army on a high hill with a flat top, called Gergovia. All of us who have visited Clermont have probably seen the hill. Vercingetorix makes three camps for his army on the hill, and the Arverni have a town there. The Gaul has so placed himself that there shall be a river not capable of being forded between himself and Cæsar. But the Roman general makes a bridge and sets himself down with his legions before Gergovia. The limits of this little work do not admit of any detailed description of Cæsar's battles ; but perhaps there is none more interesting than this siege. The three Gaulish camps are taken. The women of Gergovia, thinking that their town is taken also, leaning over the walls, implore mercy from the Romans, and beg that they may not be treated as have the women of Avaricum. Certain leading Roman soldiers absolutely climb up into the town. The reader also thinks that Cæsar is to prevail, as he always does prevail. But he is beaten back, and

has to give it up. On this occasion the gallant Vercingetorix is the master of the day, and Cæsar excuses himself by explaining how it was that his legions were defeated through the rash courage of his own men, and not by bad generalship of his own. And it probably was so. The reader always feels inclined to believe the Commentary, even when he may most dislike Cæsar. Cæsar again makes his bridge over the river, the Allier, and retires into the territory of his doubtful friends the Ædui. He tells us himself that in that affair he lost 700 men and 46 officers.

It seems that at this time Cæsar with his whole army must have been in great danger of being destroyed by the Gauls. Why Vercingetorix did not follow up his victory and prevent Cæsar from escaping over the Allier is not explained. No doubt the requirements of warfare were not known to the Gaul as they were to the Roman. As it was, Cæsar had enough to do to save his army. The Ædui, of course, turned against him again. All his stores and treasure and baggage were at Noviodunum,—Nevers,—a town belonging to the Ædui. These are seized by his allies, who destroy all that they cannot carry away, and Cæsar's army is in danger of being starved. Everything has been eaten up where he is, and the Loire, without bridges or fords, was between him and a country where food was to be found. He does cross the river, the Ædui having supposed that it would be impossible. He finds a spot in which his men can wade across with their shoulders just above the waters. Bad as the spot is for fording, in his great difficulty he makes the attempt and accomplishes it.

Then there is an account of a battle which Labienus is obliged to fight up near Paris. He has four legions away with him there, and having heard of Cæsar's misfortune at Gergovia, knows how imperative it is that he should join his chief. He fights his battle and wins it, and Cæsar tells the story quite as enthusiastically as though he himself had been the conqueror. When this difficulty is overcome, Labienus comes south and joins his Imperator.

The Gauls are still determined to drive Cæsar out of their country, and with this object call together a great council at Bibracte, which was the chief town of the *Ædui*. It was afterwards called Augustodunum, which has passed into the modern name Autun. At this meeting, the *Ædui*, who, having been for some years past bolstered up by Rome, think themselves the first of all the Gauls, demand that the chief authority in the revolt against Rome,—now that they have revolted,—shall be intrusted to them. An *Æduan* chief, they think, should be the commander-in-chief in this war against Rome. Who has done so much for the revolt as the *Ædui*, who have thrown over their friends the Romans,—now for about the tenth time? But Vercingetorix is unanimously elected, and the *Æduan* chiefs are disgusted. Then there is another battle. Vercingetorix thinks that he is strong enough to attack the enemy as Cæsar is going down south towards the Province. Cæsar, so says Vercingetorix, is in fact retreating. And, indeed, it seems that Cæsar was retreating. But the Gauls are beaten and fly, losing some three thousand of their men who are slaughtered in the fight. Vercingetorix shuts him-

self up in a town called Alesia, and Cæsar prepares for another siege.

The taking of Alesia is the last event told in Cæsar's *Commentary on the Gallic War*, and of all the stories told, it is perhaps the most heartrending. Civilisation was never forwarded in a fashion more terrible than that which prevailed at this siege. Vercingetorix with his whole army is forced into the town, and Cæsar surrounds it with ditches, works, lines, and ramparts, so that no one shall be able to escape from it. Before this is completed, and while there is yet a way open of leaving the town, the Gaulish chief sends out horsemen, who are to go to all the tribes of Gaul, and convene the fighting men to that place, so that by their numbers they may raise the siege and expel the Romans. We find that these horsemen do as they are bidden, and that a great Gaulish conference is held, at which it is decided how many men shall be sent by each tribe. Vercingetorix has been very touching in his demand that all this shall be done quickly. He has food for the town for thirty days. Probably it may be stretched to last a little longer. Then, if the tribes are not true to him, he and the eighty thousand souls he has with him must perish. The horsemen make good their escape from the town, and Vercingetorix, with his eighty thousand hungry souls around him, prepares to wait. It seems to us, when we think what must have been the Gallia of those days, and when we remember how far thirty days would now be for sufficing for such a purpose, that the difficulties to be overcome were insuperable. But Cæsar says that the tribes did send their men, each tribe sending the number demanded,

except the Bellovaci,—the men of Beauvais,—who declared that they chose to wage war on their own account; but even they, out of kindness, lent two thousand men. Cæsar explains that even his own best friends among the Gauls,—among whom was one Commius, who had been very useful to him in Britain, and whom he had made king over his own tribe, the Atrebates,—at this conjuncture of affairs felt themselves bound to join the national movement. This Commius had even begged for the two thousand men of Beauvais. So great, says Cæsar, was the united desire of Gaul to recover Gallic liberty, that they were deterred from coming by no memory of benefits or of friendship. Eight thousand horsemen and two hundred and forty thousand footmen assembled themselves in the territories of the Ædui. Alesia was north of the Ædui, amidst the Lingones. This enormous army chose its generals, and marched off to Alesia to relieve Vercingetorix.

But the thirty days were past, and more than past, and the men and women in Alesia were starving. No tidings ever had reached Alesia of the progress which was being made in the gathering of their friends. It had come to be very bad with them there. Some were talking of unconditional surrender. Others proposed to cut their way through the Roman lines. Then one Critognatus had a suggestion to make, and Cæsar gives us the words of his speech. It has been common with the Greek and Latin historians to put speeches into the mouths of certain orators, adding the words when the matter has come within either their knowledge or belief. Cæsar does not often

thus risk his credibility; but on this occasion he does so. We have the speech of Critognatus, word for word. Of those who speak of surrender he thinks so meanly that he will not notice them. As to that cutting a way through the Roman lines, which means death, he is of opinion that to endure misfortune is greater than to die. Many a man can die who cannot bravely live and suffer. Let them endure a little longer. Why doubt the truth and constancy of the tribes? Then he makes his suggestion. Let those who can fight, and are thus useful,—eat those who are useless and cannot fight; and thus live till the levies of all Gaul shall have come to their succour! Those who have authority in Alesia cannot quite bring themselves to this, but they do that which is horrible in the next degree. They will turn out of the town all the old, all the weak, and all the women. After that,—if that will not suffice,—then they will begin to eat each other. The town belongs, or did belong, to a people called the Mandubii,—not to Vercingetorix or his tribe; and the Mandubii, with their children and women, are compelled to go out.

But whither shall they go? Cæsar has told us that there was a margin of ground between his lines and the city wall,—an enclosed space from which there was no egress except into Cæsar's camp or into the besieged town. Here stand these weak ones,—aged men, women, and children,—and implore Cæsar to receive them into his camp, so that they may pass out into the open country. There they stood as suppliants, on that narrow margin of ground between two armies. Their own friends, having no food for them,

had expelled them from their own homes. Would Cæsar have mercy? Cæsar, with a wave of his hand, declines to have mercy. He tells us what he himself decides to do in eight words. "At Cæsar, depositis in vallo custodiis, recipi prohibebat." "But Cæsar, having placed guards along the rampart, forbade that they should be received." We hear no more of them, but we know that they perished!

The collected forces of Gaul do at last come up to attempt the rescue of Vercingetorix,—and indeed they come in time; were they able by coming to do anything? They attack Cæsar in his camp, and a great battle is fought beneath the eyes of the men in Alesia. But Cæsar is very careful that those who now are hemmed up in the town shall not join themselves to the Gauls who had spread over the country all around him. We hear how during the battle Cæsar comes up himself, and is known by the colour of his cloak. We again feel, as we read his account of the fighting, that the Gauls nearly win, and that they ought to win. But at last they are driven headlong in flight,—all the levies of all the tribes. The Romans kill very many: were not the labour of killing too much for them, they might kill all. A huge crowd, however, escapes, and the men scatter themselves back into their tribes.

On the next day Vercingetorix yields himself and the city to Cæsar. During the late battle he and his men shut up within the walls have been simply spectators of the fighting. Cæsar is sitting in his lines before his camp; and there the chieftains, with Vercingetorix at their head, are brought up to him. Plu-

tarch tells us a story of the chieftain riding up before Cæsar, to deliver himself, with gilt armour, on a grand horse, caracolling and prancing. We cannot fancy that any horse out of Alesia, could, after the siege, have been fit for such holiday occasion. The horses out of Vercingetorix's stables had probably been eaten many days since. Then Cæsar again forgives the Ædui; but Vercingetorix is taken as a prisoner to Rome, is kept a prisoner for six years, is then led in Cæsar's Triumph, and, after these six years, is destroyed, as a victim needed for Cæsar's glory,—that so honour may be done to Cæsar! Cæsar puts his army into winter quarters, and determines to remain himself in Gaul during the winter. When his account of these things reaches Rome, a "supplication" of twenty days is decreed in his honour.

This is the end of Cæsar's Commentary "*De Bello Gallico*." The war was carried on for two years more; and a memoir of Cæsar's doings during those two years,—B.C. 51 and 50,—was written, after Cæsar's manner, by one Aulus Hirtius. There is no pretence on the writer's part that this was the work of Cæsar's hands, as in a short preface he makes an author's apology for venturing to continue what Cæsar had begun. The most memorable circumstance of Cæsar's warfares told in this record of two campaigns is the taking of Uxelodunum, a town in the south-west of France, the site of which is not now known. Cæsar took the town by cutting off the water, and then horribly mutilated the inhabitants who had dared to defend their own hearths.

“Cæsar,” says this historian, “knowing well that his clemency was acknowledged by all men, and that he need not fear that any punishment inflicted by him would be attributed to the cruelty of his nature, perceiving also that he could never know what might be the end of his policy if such rebellions should continue to break out, thought that other Gauls should be deterred by the fear of punishment.” So he cut of the hands of all those who had borne arms at Uxellodunum, and turned the maimed wretches adrift upon the world! And his apologist adds, that he gave them life so that the punishment of these wicked ones,—who had fought for their liberty,—might be the more manifest to the world at large! This was perhaps the crowning act of Cæsar’s cruelty,—defended, as we see, by the character he had achieved for clemency!

Soon after this Gaul was really subdued, and then we hear the first preparatory notes of the coming civil war. An attempt was made at Rome to ruin Cæsar in his absence. One of the consuls of the year,—B.C. 51,—endeavoured to deprive him of the remainder of the term of his proconsulship, and to debar him from seeking the suffrages of the people for the consulship in his absence. Two of his legions are also demanded from him, and are surrendered by him. The order, indeed, is for one legion from him and one from Pompeius; but he has had with him, as the reader will remember, a legion borrowed from Pompeius;—and thus in fact Cæsar is called upon to give up two legions. And he gives them up,—not being as yet quite ready to pass the Rubicon.

CHAPTER IX.

FIRST BOOK OF THE CIVIL WAR.—CÆSAR CROSSES THE RUBICON.—FOLLOWS POMPEY TO BRUNDISIUM.—AND CONQUERS AFRANIUS IN SPAIN.—B.C. 49.

CÆSAR now gives us his history of that civil war in which he and Pompey contended for the mastery over Rome and the Republic. In his first Commentary he had recorded his campaigns in Gaul,—campaigns in which he reduced tribes which were, if not hostile, at any rate foreign, and by his success in which he carried on and maintained the potency, traditions, and purport of the Roman Republic. It was the ambition of the Roman to be master of the known world. In his ideas no more of the world was really known than had become Roman, and any extension to the limits of this world could only be made by the addition of so-called barbarous tribes to the number of Roman subjects. In reducing Gaul, therefore, and in fighting with the Germans, and in going over to Britain, Cæsar was doing that which all good Romans wished to see done, and was rivalling in the West the great deeds which Pompey had accomplished for the Republic in the East. In this second Commentary he is forced to deal with a subject which must have been less gratifying to Roman readers. He

relates to us the victories which he won with Roman legions over other legions equally Roman, and by which he succeeded in destroying the liberty of the Republic.

It must be acknowledged on Cæsar's behalf that in truth liberty had fallen in Rome before Cæsar's time. Power had produced wealth, and wealth had produced corruption. The tribes of Rome were bought and sold at the various elections, and a few great oligarchs, either of this faction or of that, divided among themselves the places of trust and honour and power, and did so with hands ever open for the grasping of public wealth. An honest man with clean hands and a conscience, with scruples and a love of country, became unfitted for public employment. Cato in these days was simply ridiculous; and even Cicero, though he was a trimmer, was too honest for the times. Laws were wrested from their purposes, and the very Tribunes* of the people had become the worst of tyrants. It was necessary, perhaps, that there should be a master;—so at least Cæsar thought. He had, no doubt, seen this necessity during all these years of fighting in Gaul, and had resolved that he would not be less than First in the new order of things. So he crossed the Rubicon.

The reader of this second Commentary will find it less alluring than the first. There is less in it of adventure, less of new strange life, and less of that sound,

* The Tribunes of the people were officers elected annually to act on behalf of the people as checks on the magistracy of the Republic, and were endowed with vast powers, which they were presumed to use for the protection of liberty. But the office of Tribune had become degraded to party purposes, as had every other office of the state.

healthy, joyous feeling which sprang from a thorough conviction on Cæsar's part that in crushing the Gauls he was doing a thoroughly good thing. To us, and our way of thinking, his doings in Gaul were stained with terrible cruelty. To him and to his Romans they were foul with no such stain. How other Roman conquerors acted to other conquered peoples we may learn from the fact, that Cæsar obtained a character for great mercy by his forbearance in Gaul. He always writes as though he were free from any sting of conscience, as he tells us of the punishments which policy called upon him to inflict. But as he writes of these civil wars, there is an absence of this feeling of perfect self-satisfaction, and at the same time he is much less cruel. Hecatombs of Gauls, whether men or women or children, he could see burned or drowned or starved, mutilated or tortured, without a shudder. He could give the command for such operations with less remorse than we feel when we order the destruction of a litter of undesirable puppies. But he could not bring himself to slay Roman legionaries, even in fair fighting, with anything like self-satisfaction. In this he was either soft-hearted or had a more thorough feeling of country than generals or soldiers who have fought in civil contests since his time have shown. In the Wars of the Roses and in those of Cromwell we recognise no such feeling. The American generals were not so restrained. But Cæsar seems to have valued a Roman legionary more than a tribe of Gauls.

Nevertheless he crossed the Rubicon. We have all heard of this crossing of the Rubicon, but Cæsar says nothing about it. The Rubicon was a little

river, now almost if not altogether unknown, running into the Adriatic between Ravenna and Ariminum,—Rimini,—and dividing the provinces of so-called Cisalpine Gaul from the territory under the immediate rule of the magistracy of Rome. Cæsar was, so to say, at home north of the Rubicon. He was in his own province, and had all things under his command. But he was forbidden by the laws even to enter the territory of Rome proper while in the command of a Roman province ; and therefore, in crossing the Rubicon, he disobeyed the laws, and put himself in opposition to the constituted authorities of the city. It does not appear, however, that very much was thought of this, or that the passage of the river was in truth taken as the special sign of Cæsar's purpose, or as a deed that was irrevocable in its consequences. There are various pretty stories of Cæsar's hesitation as he stood on the brink of the river, doubting whether he would plunge the world into civil war. We are told how a spirit appeared to him and led him across the water with martial music, and how Cæsar, declaring that the die was cast, went on and crossed the fatal stream. But all this was fable, invented on Cæsar's behalf by Romans who came after Cæsar. Cæsar's purpose was, no doubt, well understood when he brought one of his legions down into that corner of his province, but offers to treat with him on friendly terms were made by Pompey and his party after he had established himself on the Roman side of the river.

When the civil war began, Cæsar had still, according to the assignment made to him, two years and a half left of his allotted period of government in the

three provinces ; but his victories and his power had been watched with anxious eyes from Rome, and the Senate had attempted to decree that he should be recalled. Pompey was no longer Cæsar's friend, nor did Cæsar expect his friendship. Pompey, who had lately played his cards but badly, and must have felt that he had played them badly, had been freed from his bondage to Cæsar by the death of Crassus, the third triumvir, by the death of Julia, Cæsar's daughter, and by the course of things in Rome. It had been an unnatural alliance arranged by Cæsar with the view of clipping his rival's wings. The fortunes of Pompey had hitherto been so bright, that he also had seemed to be divine. While still a boy, he had commanded and conquered, women had adored him, the soldiers had worshipped him. Sulla had called him the Great ; and, as we are told, had raised his hat to him in token of honour. He had been allowed the glory of a Triumph while yet a youth, and had triumphed a second time before he had reached middle life. He had triumphed again a third time, and the three Triumphs had been won in the three quarters of the globe. In all things he had been successful, and in all things happy. He had driven the swarming pirates from every harbour in the Mediterranean, and had filled Rome with corn. He had returned a conqueror with his legions from the East, and had dared to disband them, that he might live again as a private citizen. And after that, when it was thought necessary that the city should be saved, in her need, from the factions of her own citizens, he had been made sole consul. It is easier now to understand the character of Pom-

pey than the position which, by his unvaried successes, he had made for himself in the minds both of the nobles and of the people. Even up to this time, even after Cæsar's wars in Gaul, there was something of divinity hanging about Pompey, in which the Romans of the city trusted. He had been imperious, but calm in manner and self-possessed,—allowing no one to be his equal, but not impatient in making good his claims; grand, handsome, lavish when policy required it, rapacious when much was needed, never self-indulgent, heartless, false, cruel, politic, ambitious, very brave, and a Roman to the backbone. But he had this failing, this weakness;—when the time for the last struggle came, he did not quite know what it was that he desired to do; he did not clearly see his future. The things to be done were so great, that he had not ceased to doubt concerning them when the moment came in which doubt was fatal. Cæsar saw it all, and never doubted. That little tale of Cæsar standing on the bridge over the Rubicon pondering as to his future course,—divided between obedience and rebellion,—is very pretty. But there was no such pondering, and no such division. Cæsar knew very well what he meant and what he wanted.

Cæsar is full of his wrongs as he begins his second narrative. He tells us how his own friends are silenced in the Senate and in the city; how his enemies, Scipio, Cato, and Léntulus the consul, prevail; how no one is allowed to say a word for him. “Pompey himself,” he says, “urged on by the enemies of Cæsar, and because he was unwilling that any one should equal himself in honour, had turned himself

altogether from Cæsar's friendship, and had gone back to the fellowship of their common enemies,—enemies whom he himself had created for Cæsar during the time of their alliance. At the same time, conscious of the scandal of those two legions which he had stopped on their destined road to Asia and Syria and taken into his own hand, he was anxious that the question should be referred to arms." Those two legions are very grievous to Cæsar. One was the legion which, as we remember, Pompey had given up to friendship,—and the Republic. When, in the beginning of these contests between the two rivals, the Senate had decided on weakening each by demanding from each a legion, Pompey had asked Cæsar for the restitution of that which he had so kindly lent. Cæsar, too proud to refuse payment of the debt, had sent that to his former friend, and had also sent another legion, as demanded, to the Senate. They were required nominally for service in the East, and now were in the hands of him who had been Cæsar's friend but had become his enemy. It is no wonder that Cæsar talks of the infamy or scandal of the two legions! He repeats his complaint as to the two legions again and again.

In the month of January Cæsar was at Ravenna, just north of the Rubicon, and in his own province. Messages pass between him and the Senate, and he proposes his terms. The Senate also proposes its terms. He must lay down his arms, or he will be esteemed an enemy by the Republic. All Rome is disturbed. The account is Cæsar's account, but we imagine that Rome was disturbed. "Soldiers are recruited over all Italy; arms are demanded, taxes are levied on the municipal-

ities, and money is taken from the sacred shrines; all laws divine and human are disregarded." Then Cæsar explains to his soldiers his wrongs, and the crimes of Pompey. He tells them how they, under his guidance, have been victorious, how under him they have "pacified all Gaul and Germany, and he calls upon them to defend him who has enabled them to do such great things. He has but one legion with him, but that legion declares that it will obey him,—him and the tribunes of the people, some of whom, acting on Cæsar's side, have come over from Rome to Ravenna. We can appreciate the spirit of this allusion to the tribunes, so that there may seem to be still some link between Cæsar and the civic authorities. When the soldiers have expressed their goodwill, he goes to Ariminum, and so the Rubicon is passed.

There are still more messages. Cæsar expresses himself as greatly grieved that he should be subjected to so much suspense, nevertheless he is willing to suffer anything for the Republic;—"omnia pati reipublicæ causâ." Only let Pompey go to his province, let the legions in and about Rome be disbanded, let all the old forms of free government be restored, and panic be abolished, and then,—when that is done,—all difficulties may be settled in a few minutes' talking. The consuls and Pompey send back word that if Cæsar will go back into Gaul and dismiss his army, Pompey shall go at once to Spain. But Pompey and the consuls with their troops will not stir till Cæsar shall have given security for his departure. Each demands that the other shall first abandon his position. Of course all these messages mean nothing.

Cæsar, complaining bitterly of injustice, sends a portion of his small army still farther into the Roman territory. Marc Antony goes to Arezzo with five cohorts, and Cæsar occupies three other cities with a cohort each. The marvel is that he was not attacked and driven back by Pompey. We may probably conclude that the soldiers, though under the command of Pompey, were not trustworthy as against Cæsar. As Cæsar regrets his two legions, so no doubt do the two legions regret their commander. At any rate, the consular forces with Pompey and the consuls and a host of senators retreat southwards to Brundisium,—Brindisi,—intending to leave Italy by the port which we shall all use before long when we go eastwards. During this retreat, the first blood in the civil war is spilt at Corfinium, a town which, if it now stood at all, would stand in the Abruzzi. Cæsar there is victor in a small engagement, and obtains possession of the town. The Pompeian officers whom he finds there he sends away, and allows them even to carry with them money which he believes to have been taken from the public treasury. Throughout his route southward the soldiers of Pompey,—who had heretofore been his soldiers,—return to him. Pompey and the consuls still retreat, and still Cæsar follows them, though Pompey had boasted, when first warned to beware of Cæsar, that he had only to stamp upon Italian soil and legions would arise from the earth ready to obey him. He knows, however, that away from Rome, in her provinces, in Macedonia and Achaia, in Asia and Cilicia, in Sicily, Sardinia, and Africa, in Mauritania and the two Spains, there are Roman legions which as yet

know no Cæsar. It may be better for Pompey that he should stamp his foot somewhere out of Italy. At any rate he sends the obedient consuls and his attendant senators over to Dyrrachium in Illyria with a part of his army, and follows with the remainder as soon as Cæsar is at his heels. Cæsar makes an effort to intercept him and his fleet, but in that he fails. Thus Pompey deserts Rome and Italy,—and never again sees the imperial city or the fair land.

Cæsar explains to us why he does not follow his enemy and endeavour at once to put an end to the struggle. Pompey is provided with shipping and he is not; and he is aware that the force of Rome lies in her provinces. Moreover, Rome may be starved by Pompey, unless he, Cæsar, can take care that the corn-growing countries, which are the granaries of Rome, are left free for the use of the city. He must make sure of the two Gauls, and of Sardinia, and of Sicily, of Africa too, if it may be possible. He must win to his cause the two Spains, of which at least the northern province was at present devoted to Pompey. He sends one lieutenant to Sardinia with a legion, another to Sicily with three legions,—and from Sicily over into Africa. These provinces had been allotted to partisans of Pompey; but Cæsar is successful with them all. To Cato, the virtuous man, had been assigned the government of Sicily; but Cato finds no Pompeian army ready for his use, and, complaining bitterly that he has been deceived and betrayed by the head of his faction, runs away, and leaves his province to Cæsar's officers. Cæsar determines that he himself will carry the war into Spain.

But he found it necessary first to go to Rome, and Cæsar, in his account of what he did there, hardly tells us the whole truth. We quite go along with him when he explains to us that, having collected what sort of a Senate he could,—for Pompey had taken away with him such senators as he could induce to follow him,—and having proposed to this meagre Senate that ambassadors should be sent to Pompey, the Senate accepted his suggestion ; but that nobody could be induced to go on such an errand. Pompey had already declared that all who remained at Rome were his enemies. And it may probably be true that Cæsar, as he says, found a certain tribune of the people at Rome who opposed him in all that he was doing, though we should imagine that the opposition was not violent. But his real object in going to Rome was to lay hand on the treasure of the Republic,—the *sanctius ærarium*,—which was kept in the temple of Saturn for special emergencies of State. That he should have taken this we do not wonder ;—but we do wonder that he should have taken the trouble to say that he did not do so. He professes that he was so hindered by that vexatious tribune, that he could not accomplish the purposes for which he had come. But he certainly did take the money, and we cannot doubt but that he went to Rome especially to get it.

Cæsar, on his way to Spain, goes to Marseilles, which, under the name of Massilia, was at this time, as it is now, the most thriving mercantile port on the Mediterranean. It belonged to the province of Further Gaul, but it was in fact a colony of Greek traders. Its possession was now necessary to Cæsar. The magis-

trates of the town, when called upon for their adhesion, gave a most sensible answer. They protest that they are very fond of Cæsar, and very fond of Pompey. They don't understand all these affairs of Rome, and regret that two such excellent men should quarrel. In the mean time they prefer to hold their own town. Cæsar speaks of this decision as an injury to himself, and is instigated by such wrongs against him to besiege the city, which he does both by land and sea, leaving officers there for the purpose, and going on himself to Spain.

At this time all Spain was held by three officers, devoted to the cause of Pompey, though, from what has gone before, it is clear that Cæsar fears nothing from the south. Afranius commanded in the north and east, holding the southern spurs of the Pyrenees. Petreius, who was stationed in Lusitania, in the south-west, according to agreement, hurries up to the assistance of Afranius as soon as Cæsar approaches. The Pompeian and Cæsarian armies are brought into close quarters in the neighbourhood of Ilerda (Lerida), on the little river Sicoris, or Segre, which runs into the Ebro. They are near the mountains here, and the nature of the fighting is controlled by the rapidity and size of the rivers, and the inequality of the ground. Cæsar describes the campaign with great minuteness, imparting to it a wonderful interest by the clearness of his narrative. Afranius and Petreius hold the town of Ilerda, which is full of provisions. Cæsar is very much pressed by want, as the corn and grass have not yet grown, and the country supplies of the former year are almost exhausted. So great are his difficulties, that tidings reach Rome that Afranius has conquered him. Hearing

this, many who were still clinging to the city, doubtful as to the side they would take, go away to Pompey. But Cæsar at last manages to make Ilerda too hot for the Pompeian generals. He takes his army over one river in coracles, such as he had seen in Britain ; he turns the course of another ; fords a third, breaking the course of the stream by the bulk of his horses ; and bridges a fourth. Afranius and Petreius find that they must leave Ilerda, and escape over the Ebro among the half-barbarous tribe further south, and make their way, if possible, among the Celtibri,—getting out of Aragon into Castile, as the division was made in after-ages. Cæsar gives us as one reason for this intended march on the part of his enemies, that Pompey was well known by those tribes, but that the name of Cæsar was a name as yet obscure to the barbarians. It was not, however, easy for Afranius to pass over the Ebro without Cæsar's leave, and Cæsar will by no means give him leave. He intercepts the Pompeians, and now turns upon them that terrible engine of want from which he had suffered so much. He continues so to drive them about, still north of the Ebro, that they can get at no water ; and at last they are compelled to surrender.

During the latter days of this contest the Afranians, as they are called—Roman legionaries, as are the soldiers of Cæsar—fraternise with their brethren in Cæsar's camp, and there is something of free intercourse between the two Roman armies. The upshot is that the soldiers of Afranius resolve to give themselves up to Cæsar, bargaining, however, that their own generals shall be secure. Afranius is willing enough ; but his

brother-general, Petreius, with more of the Roman at heart, will not hear of it. We shall hear hereafter the strange fate of this Petreius. He stops the conspiracy with energy, and forces from his own men, and even from Afranius, an oath against surrender. He orders that all Cæsar's soldiers found in their camp shall be killed, and, as Cæsar tells us, brings back the affair to the old form of war. But it is all of no avail. The Afranians are so driven by the want of water, that the two generals are at last compelled to capitulate and lay down their arms.

Five words which are used by Cæsar in the description of this affair give us a strong instance of his conciseness in the use of words, and of the capability for conciseness which the Latin language affords. "*Pre-mebantur Afraniani pabulatione, aquabantur ægre.*" "The soldiers of Afranius were much distressed in the matter of forage, and could obtain water only with great difficulty." These twenty words translate those five which Cæsar uses, perhaps with fair accuracy; but many more than twenty would probably have been used by any English historian in dealing with the same facts.

Cæsar treats his compatriots with the utmost generosity. So many conquered Gauls he would have sold as slaves, slaughtering their leaders, or he would have cut off their hands, or have driven them down upon the river and have allowed them to perish in the waters. But his conquered foes are Roman soldiers, and he simply demands that the army of Afranius shall be disbanded, and that the leaders of it shall go, —whither they please. He makes them a speech in which he explains how badly they have treated him.

Nevertheless he will hurt no one. He has borne it all, and will bear it, patiently. Let the generals only leave the Province, and let the army which they have led be disbanded. He will not keep a soldier who does not wish to stay with him, and will even pay those whom Afranius has been unable to pay out of his own funds. Those who have houses and land in Spain may remain there. Those who have none he will first feed and afterwards take back, if not to Italy, at any rate to the borders of Italy. The property which his own soldiers have taken from them in the chances of war shall be restored, and he out of his own pocket will compensate his own men. He performs his promise, and takes all those who do not choose to remain, to the banks of the Var, which divides the Province from Italy, and there sets them down, full, no doubt, of gratitude to their conqueror. Never was there such clemency,—or, we may say, better policy! Cæsar's whole campaign in Spain had occupied him only forty days.

In the mean time Decimus Brutus, to whom we remember that Cæsar had given the command of the ships which he prepared against the Veneti in the west of Gaul, and who was hereafter to be one of those who slew him in the Capitol, obtains a naval victory over the much more numerous fleet of the Massilians. They had prepared seventeen big ships,—“naves longæ” they are called by Cæsar,—and of these Brutus either destroys or takes nine. In his next book Cæsar proceeds to tell us how things went on at Marseilles both by sea and land after this affair.

CHAPTER X.

SECOND BOOK OF THE CIVIL WAR.—THE TAKING OF MARSEILLES.—VARRO IN THE SOUTH OF SPAIN.—THE FATE OF CURIO BEFORE UTICA.—B.C. 49.

IN his chronicle of the Gallic war, Cæsar in each book completed the narrative of a year's campaign. In treating of the civil war he devotes the first and second books to the doings of one year. There are three distinct episodes of the year's campaign narrated in the second ;—the taking of Marseilles, the subjugation of the southern province of Spain,—if that can be said to be subjugated which gave itself up very readily,—and the destruction of a Roman army in Africa under the hands of a barbarian king. But of all Cæsar's writings it is perhaps the least interesting, as it tells us but little of what Cæsar did himself,—and in fact contains chiefly Cæsar's records of the doings of his lieutenants by sea and land.

He begins by telling us of the enormous exertions made both by the besiegers and by the besieged at Massilia, which town was now held by Domitius on the part of Pompey,—to supplement whom at sea a certain Nasidius was sent with a large fleet. Young

Brutus, as will be remembered, was attacking the harbour on behalf of Cæsar, and had already obtained a victory over the Massilians before Nasidius came up ; and Trebonius, also on the part of Cæsar, was besieging the town from the land. This Decimus Brutus was one of those conspirators who afterwards conspired against Cæsar and slew him, — and Trebonius was another of the number. The wise Greeks of the city,—more wise than fortunate, however,—had explained to Cæsar when he first expressed his wish to have the town on his side, that really to them there was no difference between Pompey and Cæsar, both of whom they loved with all their hearts,—but they had been compelled to become partisans of Pompey, the Pompeian general Domitius being the first to enter their town ; and now they find themselves obliged to fight as Pompeians in defence of their wealth and their homes. Thus driven by necessity, they fight well and do their very best to favour the side which we must henceforward call that of the Republic as against an autocrat ; —for, during this siege of Marseilles, Cæsar had been appointed Dictator, and a law to that effect had been passed at Rome, where the passing of such a law was no doubt easy enough in the absence of Pompey, of the consuls, and of all the senators who were Pompey's friends.

The Massilians had now chosen their side, and they do their very best. We are told that the Cæsarean troops, from the high ground on which Trebonius had placed his camp, could look down into the town, and could see “how all the youth who had been left in the city, and all the elders with their children and wives,

and the sentinels of the city, either stretched their hands to heaven from the walls, or, entering the temples of the immortal gods, and throwing themselves before their sacred images, prayed that the heavenly powers would give them victory. Nor was there one among them who did not believe that on the result of that day depended all that they had,"—namely, liberty, property, and life; for the Massilians, doubtless, had heard of Avaricum, of Alesia, and of Uxellodunum. "When the battle was begun," says Cæsar, "the Massilians failed not at all in valour; but, mindful of the lessons they had just received from their townsmen, fought with the belief that the present was their only opportunity of doing aught for their own preservation; and that to those who should fall in battle, loss of life would only come a little sooner than to the others, who would have to undergo the same fate, should the city be taken." Cæsar, as he wrote this, doubtless thought of what he had done in Gaul when policy demanded from him an extremity of cruelty; and, so writing, he enhanced the clemency with which, as he is about to tell us, he afterwards treated the Massilians. When the time came it did not suit him to depopulate a rich town, the trade of whose merchants was beneficial both to Rome and to the Province. He is about to tell us of his mercy, and therefore explains to us beforehand how little was mercy expected from him. We feel that every line he writes is weighed, though the time for such weighing must have been very short with one whose hands were so full as were always the hands of Cæsar.

Nasidius, whom we may call Pompey's admiral, was of no use at all. The Massilians, tempted by his coming, attack bravely the ship which bears the flag of young Brutus ; but young Brutus is too quick for them, and the unhappy Massilians run two of their biggest vessels against each other in their endeavour to pin that of the Cæsarean admiral between them. The Massilian fleet is utterly dispersed. Five are sunk, four are taken : one gets off with Nasidius, who runs away, making no effort to fight ; who has been sent there,—so Cæsar hints,—by Pompey, not to give assistance, but only to pretend to give assistance. One ship gets back into the harbour with the sad tidings ; and the Massilians—despairing only for a moment at the first blush of the bad news—determine that their walls may still be defended.

The town was very well supplied with such things as were needed for defence, the people being a provident people, well instructed and civilised, with means at their command. We are told of great poles twelve feet long, with sharp iron heads to them, which the besiegers could throw with such force from the engines on their walls as to drive them through four tiers of the wicker crates or stationary shields which the Cæsareans built up for their protection,—believing that no force could drive a weapon through them. As we read of this we cannot but think of Armstrong and Whitfield guns, and iron plates, and granite batteries, and earthworks. These terrible darts, thrown from “*balistæ*,” are very sore upon the Cæsareans ; they therefore contrive an immense tower, so high that it

cannot be reached by any weapon, so built that no wood or material subject to fire shall be on the outside,—which they erect story by story, of very great strength. And as they raise this step by step, each story is secured against fire and against the enemy. The reader,—probably not an engineer himself,—is disposed to think as he struggles through this minute description of the erection which Cæsar gives, and endeavours to realise the way in which it is done, that Cæsar must himself have served specially as an engineer. But in truth he was not at this siege himself, and had nothing to do with the planning of the tower, and must in this instance at least have got a written description from his officer,—as he probably did before when he built the memorable bridge over the Rhine. And when the tower is finished, they make a long covered way or shed,—*musculum* or *muscle* Cæsar calls it; and with this they form for themselves a passage from the big tower to a special point in the walls of the town. This muscle is so strong with its sloping roof that nothing thrown upon it will break or burn it. The Massilians try tubs of flaming pitch, and great fragments of rock; but these simply slip to the ground, and are pulled away with long poles and forks. And the Cæsareans, from the height of their great tower, have so terrible an advantage! The Massilians cannot defend their wall, and a breach is made, or almost made.

The Massilians can do no more. The very gods are against them. So they put on the habit of supplicants, and go forth to the conquerors. They will give their city to Cæsar. Cæsar is expected. Will Trebonius

be so good as to wait till Cæsar comes? If Trebonius should proceed with his work so that the soldiers should absolutely get into the town, then ;—Trebonius knows very well what would happen then. A little delay cannot hurt. Nothing shall be done till Cæsar comes. As it happens, Cæsar has already especially ordered that the city shall be spared ; and a kind of truce is made, to endure till Cæsar shall come and take possession. Trebonius has a difficulty in keeping his soldiers from the plunder ; but he does restrain them, and besiegers and besieged are at rest, and wait for Cæsar.

But these Massilians are a crafty people. The Cæsarean soldiers, having agreed to wait, take it easily, and simply amuse themselves in these days of waiting. When they are quite off their guard, and a high wind favours the scheme, the Massilians rush out and succeed in burning the tower, and the muscle, and the rampart, and the sheds, and all the implements. Even though the tower was built with brick, it burns freely,—so great is the wind. Then Trebonius goes to work, and does it all again. Because there is no more wood left round about the camp, he makes a rampart of a new kind,—hitherto unheard of,—with bricks. Doubtless the Cæsarean soldiers had first to make the bricks, and we can imagine what were their feelings in reference to the Massilians. But however that may be, they work so well and so hard that the Massilians soon see that their late success is of no avail. Nothing is left to them. Neither perfidy nor valour can avail them, and now again they give themselves up. They

are starved and suffering from pestilence, their fortifications are destroyed, they have no hope of aid from without,—and now they give themselves up,—intending no fraud. “*Sese dedere sine fraude constituunt.*” Domitius, the Pompeian general, manages to escape in a ship. He starts with three ships, but the one in which he himself sails alone escapes the hands of “young” Brutus. Surely now will Marseilles be treated with worse treatment than that which fell on the Gaulish cities. But such is by no means Cæsar’s will. Cæsar takes their public treasure and their ships, and reminding them that he spares them rather for their name and old character than for any merits of theirs shown towards him, leaves two legions among them, and goes to Rome. At Avaricum, when the Gauls had fought to defend their own liberties, he had destroyed everybody;—at Alesia he had decreed the death of every inhabitant when they had simply asked him leave to pass through his camp;—at Uxellodunum he had cut off the hands and poked out the eyes of Gauls who had dared to fight for their country. But the Gauls were barbarians whom it was necessary that Cæsar should pacify. The Massilians were Greeks, and a civilised people,—and might be useful.

Before coming on to Marseilles there had been a little more for Cæsar to do in Spain, where, as was told in the last chapter, he had just compelled Afranius and Petreius to lay down their arms and disband their legions. Joined with them had been a third Pompeian general, one Varro,—a distinguished man, though not, perhaps, a great general,—of whom Cæsar tells us that

with his Roman policy he veered between Pompeian and Cæsarean tactics till, unfortunately for himself, he declared for Pompey and the wrong side, when he heard that Afranius was having his own way in the neighbourhood of Lerida. But Varro is in the south of Spain, in Andalusia,—or Bætica, as it was then called,—and in this southern province of Spain it seems that Cæsar's cause was more popular than that of Pompey. Cæsar, at any rate, has but little difficulty with Varro. The Pompeian officer is deserted by his legions, and gives himself up very quickly. Cæsar does not care to tell us what he did with Varro, but we know that he treated his brother Roman with the utmost courtesy. Varro was a very learned man, and a friend of Cicero's, and one who wrote books, and was a credit to Rome as a man of letters if not as a general. We are told that he wrote 490 volumes, and that he lived to be eighty-eight,—a fate very uncommon with Romans who meddled with public affairs in these days. Cæsar made everything smooth in the south of Spain, restoring the money and treasures which Varro had taken from the towns, and giving thanks to everybody. Then he went on over the Pyrenees to Marseilles, and made things smooth there.

But in the mean time things were not at all smooth in Africa. The name of Africa was at this time given to a small province belonging to the Republic, lying to the east of Numidia, in which Carthage had stood when Carthage was a city, containing that promontory which juts out towards Sicily, and having Utica as its Roman capital. It has been already said that

when Cæsar determined to gain possession of certain provinces of the Republic before he followed Pompey across the Adriatic, he sent a lieutenant with three legions into Sicily, desiring him to go on to Africa as soon as things should have been arranged in the island after the Cæsarean fashion. The Sicilian matter is not very troublesome, as Cato, the virtuous man, in whose hands the government of the island had been intrusted on behalf of the Republic, leaves it on the arrival of the Cæsarean legions, complaining bitterly of Pompey's conduct. Then Cæsar's lieutenant goes over to Africa with two legions, as commanded, proposing to his army the expulsion of one Attius Varus, who had, according to Cæsar's story, taken irregular possession of the province, keeping it on behalf of Pompey, but not allowing the governor appointed by the Republic so much as to put his foot on the shore. This lieutenant was a great favourite of Cæsar, by name Curio, who had been elected tribune of the people just when the Senate was making its attempt to recall Cæsar from his command in Gaul. In that emergency, Curio as tribune had been of service to Cæsar, and Cæsar loved the young man. He was one of those who, though noble by birth, had flung themselves among the people, as Catiline had done and Clodius,—unsteady, turbulent, unscrupulous, vicious, needy, fond of pleasure, rapacious, but well educated, brave, and clever. Cæsar himself had been such a man in his youth, and could easily forgive such faults in the character of one who, in addition to such virtues as have been named, possessed that farther and greater

virtue of loving Cæsar. Cæsar expected great things from Curio, and trusted him thoroughly. Curio, with many ships and his two legions, lands in Africa, and prepares to win the province for his great friend. He does obtain some little advantage, so that he is called "Imperator" by his soldiers,—a name not given to a general till he has been victorious in the field; but it seems clear, from Cæsar's telling of the story, that Curio's own officers and own soldiers distrusted him, and were doubtful whether they would follow him, or would take possession of the ships and return to Sicily;—or would go over to Attius Varus, who had been their commander in Italy before they had deserted from Pompey to Cæsar. A council of war is held, and there is much doubt. It is not only or chiefly of Attius Varus, their Roman enemy, that they are afraid; but there is Juba in their neighbourhood, the king of Numidia, who will certainly fight for Varus and against Curio. He is Pompey's declared friend, and equally declared as Cæsar's foe. He has, too, special grounds of quarrel against Curio himself; and if he comes in person with his army,—bringing such an army as he can bring if he pleases,—it will certainly go badly with Curio, should Curio be distant from his camp. Then Curio, not content with his council of war, and anxious that his soldiers should support him in his desire to fight, makes a speech to the legionaries. We must remember, of course, that Cæsar gives us the words of this speech, and that Cæsar must himself have put the words together.

It is begun in the third person. He,—that is Curio,

— tells the men how useful they were to Cæsar at Corfinium, the town at which they went over from Pompey to Cæsar. But in the second sentence he breaks into the first person and puts the very words into Curio's mouth. "For you and your services," he says, "were copied by all the towns; nor is it without cause that Cæsar thinks kindly of you, and the Pompeians unkindly. For Pompey, having lost no battle, but driven by the result of your deed, fled from Italy. Me, whom Cæsar holds most dear, and Sicily and Africa without which he cannot hold Rome and Italy, Cæsar has intrusted to your honour. There are some who advise you to desert me,—for what can be more desirable to such men than that they at the same time should circumvent me, and fasten upon you a foul crime? . . . But you,—have you not heard of the things done by Cæsar in Spain,—two armies beaten, two generals conquered, two provinces gained, and all this done in forty days from that on which Cæsar first saw his enemy? Can those who, uninjured, were unable to stand against him, resist him now that they are conquered? And you, who followed Cæsar when victory on his side was uncertain, now that fortune has declared herself, will you go over to the conquered side when you are about to realise the reward of your zeal? . . . But perhaps, though you love Cæsar, you distrust me. I will not say much of my own deserts towards you,—which are indeed less as yet than I had wished or you had expected." Then, having thus declared that he will not speak of himself, he does venture to say a few words on the sub-

ject. “But why should I pass over my own work, and the result that has been as yet achieved, and my own fortune in war? Is it displeasing to you that I brought over the whole army, safe, without losing a ship? That, as I came, at my first onslaught, I should have dispersed the fleet of the enemy? That, in two days, I should have been twice victorious with my cavalry; that I should have cut out two hundred transports from the enemy’s harbour; that I should have so harassed the enemy that neither by land nor sea could they get food to supply their wants? Will it please you to repudiate such fortune and such guidance, and to connect yourself with the disgrace at Corfinium, the flight from Italy,”—namely, Pompey’s flight to Dyrrachium,—“the surrender of Spain, and the evils of this African war? I indeed have wished to be called Cæsar’s soldier, and you have called me your Imperator. If it repents you of having done so, I give you back the compliment. Give me back my own name, lest it seem that in scorn you have called me by that title of honour.”

This is very spirited; and the merely rhetorical assertion by Cæsar that Curio thus spoke to his soldiers is in itself interesting, as showing us the way in which the legionaries were treated by their commanders, and in which the greatest general, of that or of any age, thought it natural that a leader should address his troops. It is of value, also, as showing the difficulty of keeping any legion true ‘o either side in a civil war, in which, on either side, the men must fight for a commander they had learned to respect,

and against a commander they respected,—the commander in each case being a Roman Emperor. Curio, too, as we know, was a man who on such an occasion could use words. But that he used the words here put into his mouth, or any words like them, is very improbable. Cæsar was anxious to make the best apology he could for the gallant young friend who had perished in his cause, and has shown his love by making the man he loved memorable to all posterity.

But before the dark hour comes upon him the young man has a gleam of success, which, had he really spoken the words put into his mouth by Cæsar, would have seemed to justify them. He attacks the army of his fellow-Roman, Varus, and beats it, driving it back into Utica. He then resolves to besiege the town, and Cæsar implies that he would have been successful through the Cæsarean sympathies of the townsmen,—had it not been for the approach of the terrible Juba. Then comes a rumour which reaches Curio,—and which reaches Varus too inside the town,—that the Numidian king is hurrying to the scene with all his forces. He has finished another affair that he had on hand, and can now look to his Roman friends,—and to his Roman enemies. Juba craftily sends forward his præfect, or lieutenant, Sabura, with a small force of cavalry, and Curio is led to imagine that Juba has not come, and that Sabura has been sent with scanty aid to the relief of Varus. Surely he can give a good account of Sabura and that small body of Numidian horsemen. We see from the very first that Curio is

doomed. Cæsar, in a few touching words, makes his apology. “The young man’s youth had much to do with it, and his high spirit; his former success, too, and his own faith in his own good fortune.” There is no word of reproach. Curio makes another speech to his soldiers. “Hasten to your prey,” he says, “hasten to your glory!” They do hasten,—after such a fashion that when the foremost of them reach Sabura’s troops, the hindermost of them are scattered far back on the road. They are cut to pieces by Juba. Curio is invited by one of his officers to escape back to his tent. But Cæsar tells us that Curio in that last moment replied that having lost the army with which Cæsar had trusted him, he would never again look Cæsar in the face. That he did say some such words as these, and that they were repeated by that officer to Cæsar, is probable enough. “So, fighting, he is slain;”—and there is an end of the man whom Cæsar loved.

What then happened was very sad for a Roman army. Many hurry down to the ships at the sea; but there is so much terror, so much confusion, and things are so badly done, that but very few get over to Sicily. The remainder endeavour to give themselves up to Varus; after doing which, could they have done it, their position would not have been very bad. A Roman surrendering to a Roman would, at the worst, but find that he was compelled to change his party. But Juba comes up and claims them as his prey, and Varus does not dare to oppose the barbarian king. Juba kills the most of them, but sends a few, whom he thinks may serve his purpose and add to his glory, back to his own king-

dom. In doing which Juba behaved no worse than Cæsar habitually behaved in Gaul; but Cæsar always writes as though not only a Roman must regard a Roman as more than a man, but as though also all others must so regard Romans. And by making such assertions in their own behalf, Romans were so regarded. We are then told that the barbarian king of Numidia rode into Utica triumphant, with Roman senators in his train; and the names of two special Roman senators Cæsar sends down to posterity as having been among that base number. As far as we can spare them, they shall be spared.

Of Juba the king, and of his fate, we shall hear again.

CHAPTER XI.

THIRD BOOK OF THE CIVIL WAR.—CÆSAR FOLLOWS POMPEY INTO ILLYRIA.—THE LINES OF PETRA AND THE BATTLE OF PHARSALIA.—B.C. 48.

CÆSAR begins the last book of his last Commentary by telling us that this was the year in which he, Cæsar, was by the law permitted to name a consul. He names Publius Servilius to act in conjunction with himself. The meaning of this is, that, as Cæsar had been created Dictator, Pompey having taken with him into Illyria the consuls of the previous year, Cæsar was now the only magistrate under whose authority a consul could be elected. No doubt he did choose the man, but the election was supposed to have been made in accordance with the forms of the Republic. He remained at Rome as Dictator for eleven days, during which he made various laws, of which the chief object was to lessen the insecurity caused by the disruption of the ordinary course of things; and then he went down to Brindisi on the track of Pompey. He had twelve legions with him, but he was badly off for ships in which to transport them; and he owns that the health of the men is bad, an autumn in the south of Italy having been very severe

on men accustomed to the healthy climate of Gaul and the north of Spain. Pompey, he tells us, had had a whole year to prepare his army,—a whole year, without warfare, and had collected men and ships and money, and all that support which assent gives, from Asia and the Cyclades, from Corcyra, Athens, Bithynia, Cilicia, Phœnicia, Egypt, and the free states of Achaia. He had with him nine Roman legions, and is expecting two more with his father-in-law Scipio out of Syria. He has three thousand archers from Crete, from Sparta, and from Pontus; he has twelve hundred slingers, and he has seven thousand cavalry from Galatia, Cappadocia, and Thrace. A valorous prince from Macedonia had brought him two hundred men, all mounted. Five hundred of Galatian and German cavalry, who had been left to overawe Ptolemy in Egypt, are brought to Pompey by the filial care of young Cnæus. He too had armed eight hundred of their own family retainers, and had brought them armed. Antiochus of Commagena sends him two hundred mounted archers,—mercenaries, however, not sent without promise of high payment. Dardani,—men from the land of old Troy, Bessi, from the banks of the Hebrus, Thessalians and Macedonians, have all been crowded together under Pompey's standard. We feel that Cæsar's mouth waters as he recounts them. But we feel also that he is preparing for the triumphant record in which he is about to tell us that all these swarms did he scatter to the winds of heaven with the handful of Roman legionaries which he at last succeeded in landing on the shores of Illyria.

Pompey has also collected from all parts "*frumenti vim maximam*"—"a great power of corn indeed," as an Irishman would say, translating the words literally. And he has covered the seas with his ships, so as to hinder Cæsar from coming out of Italy. He has eight vice-admirals to command his various fleets,—all of whom Cæsar names ; and over them all, as admiral-in-chief, is Bibulus, who was joint-consul with Cæsar before Cæsar went to Gaul, and who was so harassed during his consulship by the Cæsareans that he shut himself up in his house, and allowed Cæsar to rule as sole consul. Now he is about to take his revenge ; but the vengeance of such a one as Bibulus cannot reach Cæsar.

Cæsar having led his legions to Brindisi, makes them a speech which almost beats in impudence anything that he ever said or did. He tells them that as they have now nearly finished all his work for him ;—they have only got to lay low the Republic with Pompey the Great, and all the forces of the Republic—to which, however, have to be added King Ptolemy in Egypt, King Pharnaces in Asia, and King Juba in Numidia ;—they had better leave behind them at Brindisi all their little property, the spoils of former wars, so that they may pack the tighter in the boats in which he means to send them across to Illyria,—if only they can escape the mercies of ex-Consul Admiral Bibulus. There is no suggestion that at any future time they will recover their property. For their future hopes they are to trust entirely to Cæsar's generosity. With one shout they declare their readiness to obey him. He takes over

seven legions, escaping the dangers of those “rocks of evil fame,” the Acroceraunia of which Horace tells us, —and escaping Bibulus also, who seems to have shut himself up in his ship as he did before in his house during the consulship. Cæsar seems to have made the passage with the conviction that had he fallen into the hands of Bibulus everything would have been lost. And with ordinary precaution and diligence on the part of Bibulus such would have been the result. Yet he makes the attempt,—trusting to the Fortune of Cæsar,—and he succeeds. He lands at a place which he calls Palæste on the coast of Epirus, considerably to the south of Dyrrachium, in Illyria. At Dyrrachium Pompey had landed the year before, and there is now stored that wealth of provision of which Cæsar has spoken. But Bibulus at last determines to be active, and he does manage to fall upon the empty vessels which Cæsar sends back to fetch the remainder of his army. “Having come upon thirty of them, he falls upon them with all the wrath occasioned by his own want of circumspection and grief, and burns them. And in the same fire he kills the sailors and the masters of the vessels,—hoping to deter others,” Cæsar tells us, “by the severity of the punishment.” After that we are not sorry to hear that he potters about on the seas very busy, but still incapable, and that he dies, as it seems, of a broken heart. He does indeed catch one ship afterwards,—not laden with soldiers, but coming on a private venture, with children, servants, and suchlike, dependants and followers of Cæsar’s camp. All these, including the children, Bibulus slaughters, down to

the smallest child. We have, however, to remember that the story is told by Cæsar, and that Cæsar did not love Bibulus.

Marc Antony has been left at Brindisi in command of the legions which Cæsar could not bring across at his first trip for want of sufficient ship-room, and is pressed very much by Cæsar to make the passage. There are attempts at treaties made, but as we read the account we feel that Cæsar is only obtaining the delay which is necessary to him till he shall have been joined by Antony. We are told how by this time the camps of Cæsar and Pompey have been brought so near together that they are separated only by the river Apsus,—for Cæsar had moved northwards towards Pompey's stronghold. And the soldiers talked together across the stream; "nor, the while, was any weapon thrown,—by compact between those who talked." Then Cæsar sends Vatinius, as his ambassador, down to the river to talk of peace; and Vatinius demands with a loud voice "whether it should not be allowed to citizens to send legates to citizens, to treat of peace;—a thing that has been allowed even to deserters from the wilds of the Pyrenees and to robbers,—especially with so excellent an object as that of hindering citizens from fighting with citizens." This seems so reasonable, that a day is named, and Labienus,—who has deserted from Cæsar and become Pompeian,—comes to treat on one side of the river, and Vatinius on the other. But,—so Cæsar tells the story himself,—the Cæsarean soldiers throw their weapons at their old general. They probably cannot endure the voice or sight of one whom they re-

gard as a renegade. Labienus escapes under the protection of those who are with him,—but he is full of wrath against Cæsar. “After this,” says he, “let us cease to speak of treaties, for there can be no peace for us till Cæsar’s head has been brought to us.” But the colloquies over the little stream no doubt answered Cæsar’s purpose.

Cæsar is very anxious to get his legions over from Italy, and even scolds Antony for not bringing them. There is a story,—which he does not tell himself,—that he put himself into a small boat, intending to cross over to Brindisi in a storm, to hurry matters, and that he encouraged the awe-struck master of the boat by reminding him that he would carry “Cæsar and his fortunes.” The story goes on to say that the sailors attempted the trip, but were driven back by the tempest.

At last there springs up a south-west wind, and Antony ventures with his flotilla,—although the war-ships of Pompey still hold the sea, and guard the Illyrian coast. But Cæsar’s general is successful, and the second half of the Cæsarean army is carried northward by favouring breezes towards the shore in the very sight of Pompey and his soldiers at Dyrrachium. Two ships, however, lag behind and fall into the hands of one Otacilius, an officer belonging to Pompey. The two ships, one full of recruits and the other of veterans, agree to surrender, Otacilius having sworn that he will not hurt the men. “Here you may see,” says Cæsar, “how much safety to men there is in presence of mind.” The recruits do as they have undertaken, and give them-

selves up ;—whereupon Otacilius, altogether disregarding his oath, like a true Roman, kills every man of them. But the veterans, disregarding their word also, and knowing no doubt to a fraction the worth of the word of Otacilius, run their ship ashore in the night, and, with much fighting, get safe to Antony. Cæsar implies that the recruits even would have known better had they not been sea-sick ; but that even bilge-water and bad weather combined had failed to touch the ancient courage of the veteran legionaries. They were still good men—"item conflictati et tempestatis et sentinæ vitiis."

We are then told how Metellus Scipio, coming out of Syria with his legions into Macedonia, almost succeeds in robbing the temple of Diana of Ephesus on his way. He gets together a body of senators, who are to give evidence that he counts the money fairly as he takes it out of the temple. But letters come from Pompey just as he is in the act, and he does not dare to delay his journey even to complete so pleasant a transaction. He comes to meet Pompey and to share his command at the great battle that must soon be fought. We hear, too, how Cæsar sends his lieutenants into Thessaly and Ætolia and Macedonia, to try what friends he has there, to take cities, and to get food. He is now in a land which has seemed specially to belong to Pompey ; but even here they have heard of Cæsar, and the Greeks are simply anxious to be friends with the strongest Roman of the day. They have to judge which will win, and to adhere to him. For the poor Greeks there is much difficulty in forming a judg-

ment. Presently we shall see the way in which Cæsar gives a lesson on that subject to the citizens of Gomphi. In the mean time he joins his own forces to those lately brought by Antony out of Italy, and resolves that he will force Pompey to a fight.

We may divide the remainder of this last book of the second Commentary into two episodes,—the first being the story of what occurred within the lines at Petra, and the second the account of the crowning battle of Pharsalia. In the first Pompey was the victor,—but the victory, great as it was, has won from the world very little notice. In the second, as all the world knows, Cæsar was triumphant and henceforward dominant. And yet the affair at Petra should have made a Pharsalia unnecessary, and indeed impossible. Two reasons have conspired to make Pompey's complete success at Petra unimportant in the world's esteem. This Commentary was written not by Pompey but by Cæsar; and then, unfortunately for Pompey, Pharsalia was allowed to follow Petra.

It is not very easy to unravel Cæsar's story of the doings of the two armies at Petra. Nor, were this ever so easy, would our limits or the purport of this little volume allow us to attempt to give that narrative in full to our readers. Cæsar had managed to join the legions which he had himself brought from Italy with those which had crossed afterwards with Antony, and was now anxious for a battle. His men, though fewer in number than they who followed Pompey, were fit for fighting, and knew all the work of soldiering. Pompey's men were for the most part beginners;—but

they were learning, and every week added to their experience was a week in Pompey's favour. With hope of forcing a battle, Cæsar managed to get his army between Dyrrachium, in which were kept all Pompey's stores and wealth of war, and the army of his opponent, so that Pompey, as regarded any approach by land, was shut off from Dyrrachium. But the sea was open to him. His fleet was everywhere on the coast, while Cæsar had not a ship that could dare to show its bow upon the waters.

There was a steep rocky promontory some few miles north of Dyrrachium, from whence there was easy access to the sea, called Petra, or the rock. At this point Pompey could touch the sea, but between Petra and Dyrrachium Cæsar held the country. Here, on this rock, taking in for the use of his army a certain somewhat wide amount of pasturage at the foot of the rock, Pompey placed his army, and made intrenchments all round from sea to sea, fortifying himself, as all Roman generals knew how to do, with a bank and ditch and twenty-four turrets and earthworks that would make the place absolutely impregnable. The length of his lines was fifteen Roman miles,—more than thirteen English miles,—so that within his works he might have as much space as possible to give him grass for his horses. So placed, he had all the world at his back to feed him. Not only could he get at that wealth of stores which he had amassed at Dyrrachium, and which were safe from Cæsar, but the coasts of Greece, and Asia, and Egypt were open to his ships. Two things only were wanting to him,—sufficient grass

for his horses, and water. But all things were wanting to Cæsar,—except grass and water. The Illyrian country at his back was one so unproductive, being rough and mountainous, that the inhabitants themselves were in ordinary times fed upon imported corn. And Pompey, foreseeing something of what might happen, had taken care to empty the storehouses and to leave the towns behind him destitute and impoverished.

Nevertheless Cæsar, having got the body of his enemy, as it were, imprisoned at Petra, was determined to keep his prisoner fast. So round and in front of Pompey's lines he also made other lines, from sea to sea. He began by erecting turrets and placing small detachments on the little hills outside Pompey's lines, so as to prevent his enemy from getting the grass. Then he joined these towers by lines, and in this way surrounded the other lines,—thinking that so Pompey would not be able to send out his horsemen for forage; and again, that the horses inside at Petra might gradually be starved; and again “that the reputation,”—“*auctoritatem*,”—“which in the estimation of foreign nations belonged chiefly to Pompey in this war, would be lessened when the story should have been told over the world that Pompey had been besieged by Cæsar, and did not dare to fight.”

We are, perhaps, too much disposed to think,—reading our history somewhat cursorily,—that Cæsar at this time was everybody, and that Pompey was hardly worthy to be his foe. Such passages in the Commentary as that above translated,—they are not many, but a few suffice,—show that this idea is erroneous. Up

to this period in their joint courses Pompey had been the greater man; Cæsar had done very much, but Pompey had done more—and now he had on his side almost all that was wealthy and respectable in Rome. He led the Conservative party, and was still confident that he had only to bide his time, and that Cæsar must fall before him. Cæsar and the Cæsareans were to him as the spirits of the Revolution were in France to Louis XVI., to Charles X., and to Louis-Philippe, before they had made their powers credible and formidable; as the Reform Bill and Catholic Emancipation were to such men as George IV. and Lord Eldon, while yet they could be opposed and postponed. It was impossible to Pompey that the sweepings of Rome, even with Cæsar and Cæsar's army to help them, should at last prevail over himself and over the Roman Senate. "He was said at that time," we are again translating Cæsar's words, "to have declared with boasts among his own people, that he would not himself deny that as a general he should be considered to be worthless if Cæsar's legions should now extricate themselves from the position in which they had rashly entangled themselves without very great loss"—"maximo detrimento"—loss that should amount wellnigh to destruction. And he was all but right in what he said.

There was a great deal of fighting for the plots of grass and different bits of vantage-ground,—fighting which must have taken place almost entirely between the two lines. But Cæsar suffered under this disadvantage, that his works, being much the longest,

required the greatest number of men to erect them and prolong them and keep them in order; whereas Pompey, who in this respect had the least to do, having the inner line, was provided with much the greater number of men to do it. Cæsar's men, being veterans, had always the advantage in the actual fighting; but in the mean time Pompey's untried soldiers were obtaining that experience which was so much needed by them. Nevertheless Pompey suffered very much. They could not get water on the rock, and when he attempted to sink wells, Cæsar so perverted the water-courses that the wells gave no water. Cæsar tells us that he even dammed up the streams, making little lakes to hold it, so that it should not trickle down in its underground courses to the comfort of his enemies; but we should have thought that any reservoirs so made must soon have overflown themselves, and have been useless for the intended purpose. In the mean time Cæsar's men had no bread but what was made of a certain wild cabbage,—“chara,”—which grew there, which they kneaded up with milk, and lived upon it cheerfully, though it was not very palatable. To shew the Pompeians the sort of fare with which real veterans could be content to break their fasts, they threw loaves of this composition across the lines; for they were close together, and could talk to each other, and the Pompeians did not hesitate to twit their enemies with their want of provisions. But the Cæsareans had plenty of water,—and plenty of meat; and they assure Cæsar that they would rather eat the bark off the trees than allow the Pompeians to escape them.

But there was always this for Cæsar to fear,—that Pompey should land a detachment behind his lines and attack him at the back. To hinder this Cæsar made another intrenchment, with ditch and bank, running at right angles from the shore, and was intending to join this to his main work by a transverse line of fortifications running along that short portion of the coast which lay between his first lines and the second, when there came upon him the disaster which nearly destroyed him. While he was digging his trenches and building his turrets the fighting was so frequent that, as Cæsar tells us, on one day there were six battles. Pompey lost two thousand legionaries, while Cæsar lost no more than twenty; but every Cæsarean engaged in a certain turret was wounded, and four officers lost their eyes. Cæsar estimates that thirty thousand arrows were thrown upon the men defending this tower, and tells us of one Scæva, an officer, who had two hundred and thirty holes made by these arrows in his own shield.* We can only sur-

* Dean Merivale in his account of this affair reduces the number of holes in Scæva's shield to one hundred and twenty,—on the joint authority, no doubt, of Florus and Valerius Maximus; but Florus lived 201 and Val. Max. 300 years after Cæsar. Suetonius allows the full number of holes, but implies that 120 were received while the warrior was fighting in one place, and 110 while fighting in another. Lucan sings the story of Scæva at great length, but does not give the number of wounds in the shield. He seems to say that Scæva was killed on this occasion, but is not quite clear on the point. That Scæva had one eye knocked out is certain. Lucan does indeed tell us, in the very last lines of his poem, that in Egypt Cæsar once again saw his beloved centurion;—but at the moment described

mise that it must have been a very big shield, and that there must have been much trouble in counting the holes. Cæsar, however, was so much pleased that he gave Scæva a large sum of money,—something over £500, and, allowing him to skip over six intermediate ranks, made him at once first centurion—or Primipilus of the legion. We remember no other record of such quick promotion—in prose. There is, indeed, the well-known case of a common sailor who did a gallant action and was made first-lieutenant on the spot; but that is told in verse, and the common sailor was a lady.

Two perfidious Gauls to whom Cæsar had been very kind, but whom he had been obliged to check on account of certain gross peculations of which they had been guilty, though, as he tells us, he had not time to punish them, went over to Pompey, and told Pompey all the secrets of Cæsar's ditches, and forts, and mounds,—finished and unfinished. Before that, Cæsar assures us, not a single man of his had gone over to the enemy, though many of the enemy had come to him. But those perfidious Gauls did a world of mischief. Pompey, hearing how far Cæsar was from having his works along the sea-shore finished, got together a huge fleet of boats, and succeeded at night in throwing a large body of his men ashore between Cæsar's two lines, thus dividing Cæsar's forces, and coming upon them in their weakest. even Cæsar was dismayed, and the commentators doubt whether it was not Scæva's ghost that Cæsar then saw. Valerius Maximus is sure that Scæva was killed when he got the wounds;—but, if so, how could he have been rewarded and promoted? The matter has been very much disputed; but here it has been thought best to adhere to Cæsar.

point. Cæsar admits that there was a panic in his lines, and that the slaughter of his men was very great. It seems that the very size of his own works produced the ruin which befel them, for the different parts of them were divided one from another, so that the men in one position could not succour those in another. The affair ended in the total rout of the Cæsarean army. Cæsar actually fled, and had Pompey followed him we must suppose that then there would have been an end of Cæsar. He acknowledges that in the two battles fought on that day he lost 960 legionaries, 32 officers, and 32 standards.

And then Cæsar tells us a story of Labienus, who had been his most trusted lieutenant in the Gallic wars, but who had now gone over to Pompey, not choosing to fight against the Republic. Labienus demanded of Pompey the Cæsarean captives, and caused them all to be slaughtered, asking them with scorn whether veterans such as they were accustomed to run away. Cæsar is very angry with Labienus ; but Labienus might have defended himself by saying that the slaughter of prisoners of war was a custom he had learned in Gaul. As for those words of scorn, Cæsar could hardly have heard them with his own ears, and we can understand that he should take delight in saying a hard thing of Labienus.

Pompey was at once proclaimed Imperator. And Pompey used the name, though the victory had, alas ! been gained over his fellow-countrymen. “So great was the effect of all this on the spirits and confidence of the Pompeians, that they thought no more of the carrying on of the war, but only of the victory

they had gained." And then Cæsar throws scorn upon the Pompeians, making his own apology in the same words. "They did not care to remember that the small number of our soldiers was the cause of their triumph, or that the unevenness of the ground and narrowness of the defiles had aught to do with it; or the occupation of our lines, and the panic of our men between their double fortifications; or our army cut into two parts, so that one part could not help the other. Nor did they add to this the fact that our men, pressed as they were, could not engage themselves in a fair conflict, and that they indeed suffered more from their own numbers, and from the narrowness of the ravines, than from the enemy. Nor were the ordinary chances of war brought to mind,—how small matters, such as some unfounded suspicion, a sudden panic, a remembered superstition, may create great misfortune; nor how often the fault of a general, or the mistake of an officer, may bring injury upon an army. But they spread abroad the report of the victory of that day throughout all the world, sending forth letters and tales as though they had conquered solely by their own valour, nor was it possible that there should after this be a reverse of their circumstances." Such was the affair of Petra, by which the relative position in the world-history of Cæsar and Pompey was very nearly made the reverse of what it is.

Cæsar now acknowledges that he is driven to change the whole plan of his campaign. He addresses a speech to his men, and explains to them that this defeat, like that at Gergovia, may lead to their future

success. The victory at Alesia had sprung from the defeat of Gergovia, because the Gauls had been induced to fight; and from the reverses endured within the lines of Petra might come the same fortune;—for surely now the army of Pompey would not fear a battle. Some few officers he punishes and degrades. His own words respecting his army after their defeat are very touching. “So great a grief had come from this disaster upon the whole army, and so strong a desire of repairing its disgrace, that no one now desired the place of tribune or centurion in his legion; and all, by way of self-imposed punishment, subjected themselves to increased toil; and every man burned with a desire to fight. Some from the higher ranks were so stirred by Cæsar’s speech, that they thought that they should stand their ground where they were, and fight where they stood.” But Cæsar was too good a general for that. He moves on towards the south-east, and in retreating gets the better of Pompey, who follows him with only half a heart. After a short while Pompey gives up the pursuit. His father-in-law, Scipio, has brought a great army from the east, and is in Thessaly. As we read this we cannot fail to remember how short a time since it was that Cæsar himself was Pompey’s father-in-law, and that Pompey was Cæsar’s friend because, with too uxorious a love, he clung to Julia, his young wife. Pompey now goes eastward to unite his army to that of Scipio, and Cæsar, making his way also into Thessaly by a more southern route, joins certain forces under his lieutenant Calvinus, who had been watching Scipio,

and who barely escaped falling into Pompey's hands before he could reach Cæsar. But wherever Fortune or Chance could interfere, the Gods were always kind to Cæsar.

Then Cæsar tells us of his treatment of two towns in Thessaly, Gomphi and Metropolis. Unluckily for the poor Gomphians, Cæsar reaches Gomphi first. Now the fame of Pompey's victory at Petra had been spread abroad; and the Gomphians, who,—to give them their due,—would have been just as willing to favour Cæsar as Pompey, and who only wanted to be on the winning side that they might hold their little own in safety, believed that things were going badly with Cæsar. They therefore shut their gates against Cæsar, and sent off messengers to Pompey. They can hold their town against Cæsar for a little while, but Pompey must come quickly to their aid. Pompey comes by no means quick enough, and the Gomphians' capacity to hold their own is very short-lived. At about three o'clock in the afternoon Cæsar begins to besiege the town, and before sunset he has taken it, and given it to be sacked by his soldiers. The men of Metropolis were also going to shut their gates, but luckily they hear just in time what had happened at Gomphi,—and open them instead. Whereupon Cæsar showers protection upon Metropolis; and all the other towns of Thessaly, hearing what had been done, learn what Cæsar's favour means.

Pompey, having joined his army to that of Scipio, shares all his honours with his father-in-law. When we hear this we know that Pompey's position was not

comfortable, and that he was under constraint. He was a man who would share his honour with no one unless driven to do so. And indeed his command at present was not a pleasant one. It was much for a Roman commander to have with him the Roman Senate,—but the senators so placed would be apt to be less obedient than trained soldiers. They even accuse him of keeping them in Thessaly because he likes to lord it over such followers. But they were, nevertheless, all certain that Cæsar was about to be destroyed; and, even in Pompey's camp, they quarrel over the rewards of victory which they think that they will enjoy at Rome when their oligarchy shall have been re-established by Pompey's arms.

Before the great day arrives Labienus again appears on the scene; and Cæsar puts into his mouth a speech which he of course intends us to compare with the result of the coming battle. "Do not think, O Pompey, that this is the army which conquered Gaul and Germany,"—where Labienus himself was second in command under Cæsar. "I was present at all those battles, and speak of a thing which I know. A very small part of that army remains. Many have perished,—as a matter of course in so many battles. The autumn pestilence killed many in Italy. Many have gone home. Many have been left on the other shore. Have you not heard from our own friends who remained behind sick, that these cohorts of Cæsar's were made up at Brindisi?"—made up but the other day, Labienus implies. "This army, indeed, has been renewed from levies in the two Gauls; but all that it

had of strength perished in those two battles at Dyrrachium;”—in the contests, that is, within the lines of Petra. Upon this Labienus swears that he will not sleep under canvas again until he sleeps as victor over Cæsar; and Pompey swears the same, and everybody swears. Then they all go away full of the coming victory. We daresay there was a great deal of false confidence; but as for the words which Cæsar puts into the mouth of Labienus, we know well how much cause Cæsar had to dislike Labienus, and we doubt whether they were ever spoken.

At length the battle-field is chosen,—near the town of Pharsalus, on the banks of the river Enipeus in Thessaly. The battle has acquired world-wide fame as that of Pharsalia, which we have been taught to regard as the name of the plain on which it was fought. Neither of these names occur in the Commentary, nor does that of the river; and the actual spot on which the great contest took place seems to be a matter of doubt even now. The ground is Turkish soil,—near to the mountains which separate modern Greece from Turkey, and is not well adapted for the researches of historical travellers. Cæsar had been keeping his men on the march close to Pompey, till Pompey found that he could no longer abstain from fighting. Then came Labienus with his vaunts, and his oath,—and at length the day and the field were chosen. Cæsar at any rate was ready. At this time Cæsar was fifty-two years old, and Pompey was five years his elder.

Cæsar tells us that Pompey had 110 cohorts, or eleven legions. Had the legions been full, Pompey's army

would have contained 66,000 legionaries ; but Cæsar states their number at 45,000, or something over two-thirds of the full number. He does not forget to tell us once again that among these eleven were the two legions which he had given up in obedience to the demand of the Senate. Pompey himself, with these two very legions, placed himself on the left away from the river ; and there also were all his auxiliaries,—not counted with the legionaries,—slingers, archers, and cavalry. Scipio commanded in the centre with the legions he had brought out of Syria. So Cæsar tells us. We learn from other sources that Lentulus commanded Pompey's right wing, lying on the river—and Domitius, whom we remember as trying to hold Marseilles against young Brutus and Trebonius, the left. Cæsar had 80 cohorts, or eight legions, which should have numbered 48,000 men had his legions been full ;—but, as he tells us, he led but 22,000 legionaries, so that his ranks were deficient by more than a half. As was his custom, he had his tenth legion to the right, away from the river. The ninth, terribly thinned by what had befallen it within the lines at Petra, joined to the eleventh, lay next the river, forming part of Cæsar's left wing. Antony commanded the left wing, Domitius Calvinus, whom Cæsar sometimes calls by one name and sometimes by the other, the centre,—and Sulla the right. Cæsar placed himself to the right, with his tenth legion, opposite to Pompey. As far as we can learn, there was but little in the nature of the ground to aid either of them ;—and so the fight began.

There is not much complication, and perhaps no

great interest, in the account of the actual battle as it is given by Cæsar. Cæsar makes a speech to his army, which was, as we have already learned, and as he tells us now, the accustomed thing to do. No falser speech was ever made by man, if he spoke the words which he himself reports. He first of all reminds them how they themselves are witnesses that he has done his best to insure peace;—and then he calls to their memory certain mock treaties as to peace, in which, when seeking delay, he had pretended to engage himself and his enemy. He had never wasted, he told them, the blood of his soldiers, nor did he desire to deprive the Republic of either army—“*alterutro exercitu*”—of Pompey’s army or of his own. They were both Roman, and far be it from him to destroy aught belonging to the Republic. We must acknowledge that Cæsar was always chary of Roman life and Roman blood. He would spare it when it could be spared; but he could spill it like water when the spilling of it was necessary to his end. He was very politic; but as for tenderness,—neither he nor any Roman knew what it was.

Then there is a story of one Crastinus, who declares that whether dead or alive he will please Cæsar. He throws the first weapon against the enemy and does please Cæsar. But he has to please by his death, for he is killed in his effort.

Pompey orders that his first rank shall not leave its order to advance, but shall receive the shock of Cæsar’s attack. Cæsar points out to us that he is wrong in this, because the very excitement of a first attack gives increased energy and strength to the men. Cæsar’s

legionaries are told to attack, and they rush over the space intervening between the first ranks to do so. But they are so well trained that they pause and catch their breath before they throw their weapons. Then they throw their pikes and draw their swords, and the ranks of the two armies are close pitted against each other.

But Pompey had thought that he could win the battle, almost without calling on his legionaries for any exertion, by the simple strategic movement of his numerous cavalry and auxiliaries. He outnumbered Cæsar altogether, but in these arms he could overwhelm him with a cloud of horsemen and of archers. But Cæsar also had known of these clouds. He fought now as always with a triple rank of legionaries,—but behind his third rank,—or rather somewhat to their right shoulder,—he had drawn up a choice body of men picked from his third line, —a fourth line as it were, —whose business it was to stand against Pompey's clouds when the attempt should be made by these clouds upon their right flank. Cæsar's small body of cavalry did give way before the Pompeian clouds, and the horsemen and the archers and the slingers swept round upon Cæsar's flank. But they swept round upon destruction. Cæsar gave the word to that fourth line of picked men. "Illi—they," says Cæsar, "ran forward with the greatest rapidity, and with their standards in advance attacked the cavalry of Pompey with such violence that none of them could stand their ground;—so that all not only were forced from the ground, but being at once driven in panic, they sought the shelter of the highest mountains near them. And

when they were thus removed, all the archers and the slingers, desolate and unarmed, without any one to take care of them, were killed in heaps." Such is Cæsar's account of Pompey's great attack of cavalry which was to win the battle without giving trouble to the legions.

Cæsar acknowledges that Pompey's legionaries drew their swords bravely and began their share of the fighting well. Then at once he tells us of the failure on the part of the cavalry and of the slaughter of the poor auxiliary slingers, and in the very next sentence gives us to understand that the battle was won. Though Pompey's legions were so much more numerous than those of Cæsar, we are told that Cæsar's third line attacked the Pompeian legionaries when they were "defessi"—worn out. The few cohorts of picked men who in such marvellous manner had dispersed Pompey's clouds, following on their success, turned the flank of Pompey's legions and carried the day. That it was all as Cæsar says there can be little doubt. That he won the battle there can, we presume, be no doubt. Pompey at once flew to his camp and endeavoured to defend it. But such defence was impossible, and Pompey was driven to seek succour in flight. He found a horse and a few companions, and did not stop till he was on the sea-shore. Then he got on board a provision-vessel, and was heard to complain that he had been betrayed by those very men from whose hands he had expected victory.

We are told with much picturesque effect how Cæsar's men, hungry, accustomed to endurance, patient in all their want, found Pompey's camp prepared for

victory, and decked in luxurious preparation for the senatorial victors. Couches were strewn, and plate was put out, and tables prepared, and the tents of these happy ones were adorned with fresh ivy. The senatorial happy ones have but a bad time of it, either perishing in their flight, or escaping into the desert solitudes of the mountains. Cæsar follows up his conquest, and on the day after the battle compels the great body of the fugitives to surrender at discretion. He surrounds them on the top of a hill and shuts them out from water, and they do surrender at discretion. With stretched-out hands, prone upon the earth, these late conquerors, the cream of the Roman power, who had so lately sworn to conquer ere they slept, weeping beg for mercy. Cæsar, having said a few words to them of his clemency, gave them their lives. He recommends them to the care of his own men, and desires that they may neither be slaughtered nor robbed.

Cæsar says he lost only 200 soldiers in that battle—and among them 30 officers, all brave men. That gallant Crastinus was among the 30. Of Pompey's army 15,000 had been killed, and 24,000 had surrendered! 180 standards and 9 eagles were taken and brought to Cæsar. The numbers seem to us to be almost incredible, whether we look at those given to us in regard to the conqueror or the conquered. Cæsar's account, however, of that day's work has hitherto been taken as authoritative, and it is too late now to question it. After this fashion was the battle of Pharsalia won, and the so-called Roman Republic brought to an end.

But Cæsar by no means thought that his work was

done;—nor indeed was it nearly done. It was now clearly his first duty to pursue Pompey,—whom, should he escape, the outside provinces and distant allies of the Republic would soon supply with another army. “Cæsar thought that Pompey was to be pursued to the neglecting of all other things.” In the mean time Pompey, who seems to have been panic-struck by his misfortune, fled with a few friends down the Ægean Sea, picked his young wife up at an island as he went, and made his way to Egypt. The story of his murder by those who had the young King of Egypt in their keeping is well known and need not detain us. Cæsar tells it very shortly. Pompey sends to young Ptolemy for succour and assistance, trusting to past friendship between himself and the young king’s father. Ptolemy is in the hands of eunuchs, adventurers, and cut-throat soldiers, and has no voice of his own in the matter. But these ruffians think it well to have Pompey out of the way, and therefore they murder him. Achillas, a royal satrap, and Septimius, a Roman soldier, go out to Pompey’s vessel, as messengers from the king, and induce him to come down into their boat. Then, in the very sight of his wife, he is slaughtered, and his head is carried away as proof of the deed. Such was the end of Pompey, for whom no fortune had seemed to be too great, till Cæsar came upon the scene. We are told by the Roman poet, Lucan, who took the battle of Pharsalia as his difficult theme, that Cæsar could bear no superior, and Pompey no equal. The poet probably wished to make the latter the more magnanimous by the comparison. To us, as we examine the character of the two generals, Cæsar seems

at least as jealous of power as his son-in-law, and certainly was the more successful of the two in extruding all others from a share in the power which he coveted. Pompey in the triumvirate admitted his junior to more, as he must have felt it, than equal power: Cæsar in the triumvirate simply made a stepping-stone of the great man who was his elder. Pompey at Thessaly was forced to divide at least the name of his power with Scipio, his last father-in-law: but Cæsar never gave a shred of his mantle to be worn by another soldier.

In speaking, however, of the character of Pompey, and in comparing it with that of his greater rival, it may probably be said of him that in all his contests, both military and political, he was governed by a love of old Rome, and of the Republic as the greatest national institution which the world had ever known, and by a feeling which we call patriotism, and of which Cæsar was,—perhaps, we may say, too great to be capable. Pompey desired to lead, but to lead the beloved Republic. Cæsar, caring nothing for the things of old, with no reverence for the past, utterly destitute of that tenderness for our former footsteps which makes so many of us cling with passionate fondness to convicted errors, desired to create out of the dust of the Republic,—which fate and his genius allowed him to recast as he would,—something which should be better and truer than the Republic.

The last seven chapters of the third book of this Commentary form a commencement of the record of the Alexandrine war,—which, beyond those seven chapters, Cæsar himself did not write. That he

should have written any Commentary amidst the necessary toils of war, and the perhaps more pressing emergencies of his political condition, is one of the greatest marvels of human power. He tells us now, that having delayed but a few days in Asia, he followed Pompey first to Cyprus and then to Egypt, taking with him as his entire army three thousand two hundred men. "The rest, worn out with wounds, and battles, and toil, and the greatness of the journey, could not follow him." But he directed that legions should be made up for him from the remnants of Pompey's broken army, and, with a godlike trust in the obedience of absent vassals, he went on to Egypt. He tells us that he was kept in Alexandria by Etesian winds. But we know also that Cleopatra came to him at Alexandria, requiring his services in her contest for the crown of Egypt; and knowing at what price she bought them, we doubt the persistent malignity of the Etesian winds. Had Cleopatra been a swarthy Nubian, as some have portrayed her, Cæsar, we think, would have left Alexandria though the Etesian winds had blown in his very teeth. All winds filled Cæsar's sails. Cæsar gets possession of Cleopatra's brother Ptolemy, who, in accordance with their father's will, was to have reigned in conjunction with his sister, and the Alexandrians rise against him in great force. He slays Photinus, the servant of King Ptolemy, has his own ambassador slain, and burns the royal fleet of Egypt,—burning with it, unfortunately, the greater part of the royal library. "These things were the beginning of the Alexandrine war." These are the last words of Cæsar's last Commentary.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

HAVING concluded his ten short chapters descriptive of the ten books of the Commentaries written by Cæsar himself, the author of this little volume has finished his intended task,—and as he is specially anxious not to be thought to have made an attempt at writing history, he would not add any concluding words, were it not that three other Commentaries of Cæsar's three other wars were added to Cæsar's Commentaries by other writers. There is the Commentary on the Alexandrine war,—written probably by Hirtius, the author of the last book of the Gallic war; and two Commentaries on the African war and the Spanish war,—written, as the critics seem to think, by one Oppius, a friend whom Cæsar loved and trusted. The Alexandrine war was a war of itself, in which Cæsar was involved by his matchless audacity in following Pompey into Egypt, and perhaps by the sweetness of Cleopatra's charms. And this led also to a war in Asia Minor, the account of which is included with that of his Egyptian campaign. The African war, and that afterwards

carried on in Spain with the object of crushing out the sparks of Pompeian revolt against his power, are simply the latter portions of the civil war, and their records might have been written as chapters added to the Commentary "*De Bello Civili*."

Alexandria, when Cæsar landed there in pursuit of Pompey and had offered to him as a graceful tribute on his first arrival the head of his murdered rival, was a city almost as populous and quite as rich as Rome; and in the city, and throughout the more fertile parts of Egypt, there was a crowd of Roman soldiers left there to support and to overawe the throne of the Ptolemies. Cæsar, with hardly more than half a full legion to support him, enters Alexandria as though obedience were due to him by all in Egypt as Roman consul. He at once demands an enormous sum of money, which he claims as due to himself personally for services rendered to a former Ptolemy; he takes possession of the person of Ptolemy the young king,—and is taken possession of by Cleopatra, the young king's sister, who was joint-heir with her brother to the throne. In all his career there was perhaps nothing more audacious than his conduct in Egypt. The Alexandrians, or rather perhaps the Roman army in Egypt under the leading of the young king's satraps, rise against Cæsar, and he is compelled to fortify himself in the town. He contrives, however, to burn all the Egyptian fleet, and with it unfortunately the royal library, as we were told by himself at the end of the last Commentary. He at length allows Ptolemy to go, giving him back to the Egyptians, and thinking that the young king's presence

may serve to allay the enmity of the Alexandrians. The young king wept at leaving Cæsar, and declared that even his own kingdom was not so dear to him as the companionship of Cæsar. But the crafty false-faced boy turns against Cæsar as soon as he is free to do so. Cæsar never was in greater danger; and as one reads one feels one's self to be deprived of the right to say that no more insane thing was ever done than Cæsar did when he swaggered into Alexandria without an army at his back,—only by the remembrance that Cæsar was Cæsar. First, because he wanted some ready money, and secondly, because Cleopatra was pretty, Cæsar nearly lost the world in Egypt.

But there comes to his help a barbarian ally,—a certain Mithridates of Pergamus, a putative son of the great Mithridates of Pontus. Mithridates brings an army to Cæsar's rescue, and does rescue him. A great battle is fought on the Nile,—a battle which would have been impossible to Cæsar had not Mithridates come to his aid,—and the Egyptians are utterly dispersed. Young Ptolemy is drowned; Cleopatra is settled on her throne; and Egypt becomes subject to Cæsar. Then Cæsar hurries into Asia, finding it necessary to quell the arrogance of a barbarian who had dared to defeat a Roman general. The unfortunate conqueror is Pharnaces, the undoubted son of Mithridates of Pontus. But Cæsar comes, and sees, and conquers. He engages Pharnaces at Zela, and destroys his army; and then, we are told, inscribed upon his banners those insolent words—“Veni, vidi, vici.” He had already been made Dictator of the Roman Empire for an entire year, and had

revelled with Cleopatra at Alexandria, and was becoming a monarch.

These were the campaigns of the year 47 B.C., and the record of them is made in the Commentary "*De Bello Alexandrino*."

In the mean time things have not been going altogether smoothly for Cæsar in Italy, although his friends at Rome have made him Dictator. His soldiers have mutinied against their officers, and against his authority; and a great company of Pompeians is collected in that province of Africa in which poor Curio was conquered by Juba,—when Juba had Roman senators walking in his train, and Cæsar's army was destroyed. The province called by the name of Africa lay just opposite to Sicily, and was blessed with that Roman civilisation which belonged to the possessions of the Republic which were nearest to Rome, the great centre of all things. It is now the stronghold of the Republican faction,—as being the one spot of Roman ground in which Cæsar had failed of success. Pompey, indeed, is no more, but Pompey's two sons are here,—and Scipio, Pompey's father-in-law, whom Pompey had joined with himself in the command at Pharsalus. Labienus is here, who, since he turned from Cæsar, has been more Pompeian than Pompey himself; and Afranius, to whom Cæsar was so kind in Spain; and Petreius and King Juba,—of whom a joint story has yet to be told; and Varus, who held the province against Curio;—and last of all there is that tower of strength, the great Cato, the most virtuous and impracticable of men, who, in spite of his virtue, is always in the wrong, and of

whom the world at large only remembers that he was fond of wine, and that he destroyed himself at Utica.

They are all at Utica,—and to them for the present Utica is Rome. They establish a Senate; and Scipio, who is unworthy of the great name he bears, and is incompetent as a general, is made commander-in-chief, because Cato decides that law and routine so require. Scipio had been consul,—had been joint commander with Pompey,—and his rank is the highest. The same argument had been used when he was joined in that command,—that it was fitting that such power should be given to him because he was of consular rank. The command of the Republican fleet had been intrusted to Bibulus on the same ground. We never hear of Cæsar so bestowing promotion. He indeed is now and again led away by another fault, trusting men simply because he loves them,—by what we may call favouritism,—as he did when he allowed Curio to lose his army in Africa, and thus occasioned all this subsequent trouble. As we read of Scipio's rank we remember that we have heard of similar cause for ill-judged promotion in later times. The Pompeians, however, collect an enormous army. They have ten Roman legions, and are supported, moreover, by the whole force of King Juba. This army, we are told, is as numerous as that which Pompey commanded at Pharsalus. There is quarrelling among them for authority; quarrelling as to strategy; jealousy as to the barbarian, with acknowledged inability to act without him;—and the reader feels that it is all in vain. Cæsar comes, having quelled the mutiny of his own old veterans in Italy by a few

words. He has gone among them fearing nothing; they demand their discharge—he grants it. They require the rewards which they think to be their due, and he tells them that they shall have their money,—when he has won it with other legions. Then he addresses them not as soldiers, but as “citizens”—“*Quirites* ;” and that they cannot stand; it implies that they are no longer the invincible soldiers of Cæsar. They rally round him; the legions are re-formed, and he lands in Africa with a small army indeed,—at first with little more than three thousand men,—and is again nearly destroyed in the very first battle. But after a few months campaigning the old story has to be told again. A great battle is fought at Thapsus, a year and five months after that of Pharsalia, and the Republic is routed again and for ever. The commentator tells us that on this occasion the ferocity of Cæsar’s veterans was so great, that by no entreaties, by no commands, could they be induced to cease from the spilling of blood.

But of the destruction of the leaders separate stories are told us. Of Cato is the first story, and that best known to history. He finds himself obliged to surrender the town of Utica to Cæsar; and then, “he himself having carefully settled his own affairs, and having commended his children to Lucius Cæsar, who was then acting with him as his *quæstor*, with his usual gait and countenance, so as to cause no suspicion, he took his sword with him into his bedroom when it was his time to retire to rest,—and so killed himself.” Scipio also killed himself. Afranius was killed by Cæsar’s soldiers. Labienus, and the two sons of Pom-

pey, and Varus, escaped into Spain. Then comes the story of King Juba and Petreius. Juba had collected his wives and children, and all his wealth of gold and jewels and rich apparel, into a town of his called Zama; and there he had built a vast funeral-pile, on which, in the event of his being conquered by Cæsar, he intended to perish,—meaning that his wives and children and dependants and rich treasures should all be burned with him. So, when he was defeated, he returned to Zama; but his wives and children and dependants, being less magnificently minded than their king, and knowing his royal purpose, and being unwilling to become ornaments to his euthanasia, would not let him enter the place. Then he went to his old Roman friend Petreius, and they two sat down together to supper. Petreius was he who would not allow Afranius to surrender to Cæsar at Lerida. When they have supped, Juba proposes that they shall fight each other, so that one at least may die gloriously. They do fight, and Petreius is quickly killed. “Juba being the stronger, easily destroyed the weaker Petreius with his sword.” Then the barbarian tried to kill himself; but, failing, got a slave to finish the work. The battle of Thapsus was fought, B.C. 47. Numidia is made a province by Cæsar, and so Africa is won. We may say that the Roman Republic died with Cato at Utica.

The Spanish war, which afforded matter for the last Commentary, is a mere stamping out of the embers. Cæsar, after the affair in Africa, goes to Rome; and the historian begins his chronicle by telling us that he is detained there “*muneribus dandis*,”—by the distribu-

tion of rewards,—keeping his promise, no doubt, to those veterans whom he won back to their military obedience by calling them “Quirites,” or Roman citizens.* The sons of Pompey, Cnæus and Sextus, have collected together a great number of men to support their worn-out cause, and we are told that in the battle of Munda more than 30,000 men perished. But that was the end of it. Labienus and Varus are killed; and the historian tells us that a funeral was made for them. One Scapula, of whom it is said that he was the promoter of all this Spanish rebellion, eats his supper, has himself anointed, and is killed on his funeral-pile. Cnæus, the elder son of Pompey, escapes wounded, but at last is caught in a cave, and is killed. Sextus, the younger, escapes, and becomes a leading rebel for some years longer, till at last he also is killed by one of Antony’s officers.

This Commentary is ended, or rather is brought to an untimely close, in the middle of a speech which Cæsar makes to the inhabitants of Hipsala,—Seville,—in which he tells them in strong language how well he behaves to them, and how very badly they have be-

* Not in the Commentary, but elsewhere, we learn that he now triumphed four times, for four different victories, taking care to claim none for any victory won over Roman soldiers. On four different days he was carried through the city with his legions and his spoils and his captives. His first triumph was for the Gallic wars; and on that day Vereingetorix, the gallant Gaul whom we remember, and who had now been six years in prison, was strangled to do Cæsar honour. I think we hate Cæsar the more for his cruelty to those who were not Romans, because policy induced him to spare his countrymen.

haved to him. But we reach an abrupt termination in the middle of a sentence.

After the battle of Munda Cæsar returned to Rome, and enjoyed one year of magnificent splendour and regal power in Rome. He is made Consul for ten years, and Dictator for life. He is still high priest, and at last is called King. He makes many laws, and perhaps adds the crowning jewel to his imperishable diadem of glory by reforming the calendar, and establishing a proper rotation of months and days, so as to comprise a properly-divided year. But as there is no Commentary of this year of Cæsar's life, our readers will not expect that we should treat of it here. How he was struck to death by Brutus, Cassius, and the other conspirators, and fell at the foot of Pompey's statue, gathering his garments around him gracefully, with a policy that was glorious and persistent to the last, is known to all men and women.

“ Then burst his mighty heart ;
And in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statua,
Which all the while ran blood, Great Cæsar fell.”

That he had done his work, and that he died in time to save his name and fame from the evil deeds of which unlimited power in the State would too probably have caused the tyrant to be guilty, was perhaps not the least fortunate circumstance in a career which for good fortune has been unequalled in history.

THE END.

Ancient Classics for English Readers

EDITED BY THE

REV. W. LUCAS COLLINS, M.A.

VIRGIL



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BY THE
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INTRODUCTION.

VIRGIL has always been, for one reason or other, the most popular of all the old classical writers. His poems were a favourite study with his own countrymen, even in his own generation ; within fifty years of his death they were admitted to the very questionable honour, which they have retained ever since, of serving as a text-book for schoolboys. The little Romans studied their *Æneid*, from their master's dictation, as regularly, and probably with quite as much appreciation of its beauties, as the fourth form of an English public school, and wrote "declamations" of some kind upon its heroes. In the middle ages, when Greek literature had become almost a deserted field, and Homer in the original was a sealed book even to those who considered themselves and were considered scholars, Virgil was still the favourite with young and old. The monks in their chronicles, philosophers in their secular studies, enlivened their pages with quotations from the one author with whom no man of letters would venture to confess himself wholly unacquainted. The

works of Virgil had passed through above forty editions in Europe before the first printed edition of Homer appeared from the Florence press in 1448. He has been translated, imitated, and parodied in all the chief European languages. The fate of Dido, of Pallas, and of Euryalus, has drawn tears from successive generations of which the poet never dreamed.

In the middle ages his fame underwent a singular transformation. From the magic power of song the transition seems incongruous to the coarser material agency of the wizard. But so it was; Virgilius the poet became, in mediæval legends, Virgilius the magician. One of his Eclogues (the Eighth), in which are introduced the magical charms by which it is sought to reclaim a wandering lover, is supposed to have given the first impulse to this superstitious belief. All kinds of marvels were attributed to his agency. It was said that he built at Rome, for the Emperor Augustus, a wondrous tower, in which were set up emblematic figures of all the subject nations which acknowledged the imperial rule, each with a bell in its hand, which rang out whenever war or revolt broke out in that particular province, so that Rome knew at once in what direction to march her legions. In the same building—so the legend ran—he contrived a magic mirror, in which the enemies of the Empire could be seen when they appeared in arms; and another—surely the most terrible agency that was ever imagined in the way of domestic police—in which the guilt of any Roman citizen could be at once seen and detected. A fount of perpetual fire, and salt-springs of medicinal

virtue, were said to have been the gifts of the great enchanter to the Roman populace. At Naples the marvels which were attributed to his agency were scarcely less; and even now there is scarcely any useful or ornamental public work of early date, in the neighbourhood of that city, which is not in some way connected by vulgar tradition with the name of Virgil. The wondrous powers thus ascribed to him were, according to some legends, conferred upon him by Chiron the learned centaur—by whom the great Achilles, and the poet's own hero, Æneas, were said to have been educated; by others, with that blending of pagan belief with Christian which is so commonly found in mediæval writers, they were referred to direct communication with the Evil One.*

French scholars have always had the highest appreciation of the Augustan poet, and his popularity

* One story of this kind is perhaps curious enough for insertion. Virgil is said to have been startled one day by a voice calling to him out of a small hole in a cave. It proceeded from an Evil Spirit who had been conjured into that place of confinement, and who undertook to show Virgil certain books of necromancy on condition of his release. The bargain was made, and the condition fulfilled. "He stood before Virgil like a mighty man, whereof Virgil was afraid; and he marvelled greatly that so great a man might come out of so little a hole. Then said Virgil, 'Should ye well pass through the hole that ye came out of?' And he said, 'Yes.' 'I hold the best pledge that I have that ye cannot do it.' The devill said, 'I consent thereto.' And then the devill wrang himself into the little hole again. And when he was in, then Virgil closed him there again, so that he had no power to come out again, but there abideth still."—['Of the Lyfe of Virgilius and his deth, and the many marvayles that he dyd.']

in England is to this day as great as ever. Even a practical House of Commons, not always very patient of argument, and notoriously impatient of some prosaic speakers, will listen to a quotation from Virgil — especially when pointed against a political opponent. Those to whom his rolling measure is familiar still quote him and cheer him so enthusiastically, that others listen with more or less appreciation. To the many who have almost forgotten what they once knew of him, his lines awake reminiscences of their youth — which are always pleasant: while even those to whom he is a sound and nothing more, listen as with a kind of sacred awe. The debates of our reformed Parliament will certainly be duller, if ever Virgil comes to be proscribed as an unknown tongue.

English translators of Virgil have abounded. But the earliest and by no means the least able of those who presented the Roman poet to our northern islanders in their own vernacular was a Scotsman, Bishop Gawain Douglas of Dunkeld, that clerkly son of old Archibald “Bell-the-Cat” whom Scott names in his ‘Marmion.’ Few modern readers of Virgil are likely to be proficient in the ancient northern dialect which the bishop used; but those who can appreciate him maintain that there is considerable vigour as well as faithfulness in his version. Thomas Phaer, a Welsh physician, was the next who made the attempt, in the long verses known as Alexandrine, in 1558. A few years later came forth what might fairly be called the comic English version, though undertaken in the most serious earnest by the

translator. This was Richard Stanyhurst, an Irishman, a graduate of Oxford and student of Lincoln's Inn. He seems to have been the original prophet of that "pestilent heresy," as Lord Derby calls it, the making of English hexameters; for that was the metre which he chose, and he congratulates himself in his preface upon "having no English writer before him in this kind of poetry." Without going so far as to endorse Lord Derby's severe judgment, it may be confessed that Stanyhurst did his best to justify it. His translation, which he ushered into public with the most profound self-satisfaction, is quite curious enough to account for its reprint by the "Edinburgh Printing Society" in 1836. One of the points upon which he prides himself is the suiting the sound to the sense, which Virgil himself has done happily enough in some rare passages. So when he has to translate the line,

"Exoritur clamorque virum clangorque tubarum"

he does it as follows:—

"The townsmen roared, the trump tara-tantara rattled."

When he has to express the Cyclops forging the thunderbolts, it is

"With peale meale ramping, with thick thwack sturdily
thund'ring;"

and very much more of the same kind.

The Earl of Surrey and James Harrington tried their hand at detached portions, and although the quaint conceits which were admired in their day have little charm for the modern reader, there is not want-

ing, especially in the former, a spirit and vigour in which some of those who came before and after them lamentably failed. The translations by Vicars and Ogilby, about the middle of the seventeenth century, have little claim to be remembered except as the first presentations of the whole *Æneid* in an English poetical dress. In dull mediocrity they are about equal.

In 1697, Dryden, at the age of sixty-six, finished and published his translation; written, as he pathetically says, "in his declining years, struggling with want, and oppressed with sickness;" yet, whatever be its shortcomings, a confessedly great work, and showing few traces of these unfavourable circumstances. His great renown, and the unquestionable vigour and ability of the versification, insured its popularity at once; and it was considered, by the critics of his own and some succeeding generations, as pre-eminently the English *Virgil*. Dr Johnson said of it that "it satisfied his friends and silenced his enemies." It may still be read with pleasure, but it has grave faults. Independently of its general looseness and diffuseness, in many passages amounting to the vaguest paraphrase, there are too many instances in which, not content with making his author say a good many things which he never did say, he palpably misinterprets him. There are many passages of much vigour and beauty; but even of these it has been said, and not unfairly, by a later translator, Dr Trapp, that "where you most admire Dryden, you see the least of *Virgil*." Dryden had the advantage of consulting in manuscript a translation by the Earl of Lauderdale

(afterwards published), which has considerable merit, and to which in his preface he confesses obligations "not inconsiderable." They were, in fact, so considerable as this, that besides other hints in the matter of words and phrases, he borrowed nearly four hundred lines in different places, with scarcely an attempt at change.

Dryden was followed by various other translators more or less successful. Pitt and Symmons, the latter especially, might have earned a greater reputation had they preceded instead of followed the great poet whose laurels they plainly challenged by adopting his metre. But the recent admirable translation of the *Æneid* into the metre of Scott by Mr Conington will undoubtedly take its place henceforward as by far the most poetical, as it is also the most faithful and scholarly, rendering of the original.

THE POET.

PUBLIUS VIRGILIUS MARO—such was his full name, though we have abbreviated the sounding Roman appellatives into the curt English form of “Virgil”—lived in the age when the great Roman Empire was culminating to its fall, but as yet showed little symptom of decay. The emperor under whom he was born was that Octavianus Cæsar, nephew of the great Julius, whose title of “Augustus” gave a name to his own times which has since passed into a common term for the golden age of literature in every nation. In the Augustan age of Rome rose and flourished, in rapid succession, a large proportion of those great writers to whose works we have given the name of classics. This brilliant summer-time of literature was owing to various causes—to the increase of cultivation and refinement, to the leisure and quiet which followed after long years of war and civil commotion; but in part also it was owing to the character of the Roman emperor himself. Both Augustus and his intimate

friend and counsellor Mæcenas were the professed patrons of letters and of the fine arts. Mæcenas was of the highest patrician blood of Rome. He claimed descent from the old Etruscan kings or Lucumos—those ancient territorial chiefs who ruled Italy while Rome was yet in her infancy, such as Lars Porsena of Clusium. Clever and accomplished, an able statesman in spite of all his indolence, Mæcenas had immense influence with Augustus. At his splendid palace on the Esquiline Hill—the Holland House of the day—met all the brilliant society of Rome, and his name very soon became a synonym for a liberal patron of art and literature. To be eminent in any branch of these accomplishments was to insure the notice of the minister; and to be a *protégé* of his was an introduction at once, under the happiest auspices, to the emperor himself. Such good fortune occurred to Virgil early in his life.

He was born in the little village of Andes (probably the modern Pietola), near Mantua, and received a liberal education, as is sufficiently evident from the many allusions in his poems. When grown to manhood, he seems to have lived for some years with his father upon his modest family estate. He suffered, like very many of his countrymen—his friend and fellow-poet Horace among the number—from the results of the great civil wars which so long desolated Italy, and which ended in the fall of the Republic at the battle of Philippi. The district near Mantua was assigned and parcelled out among the legionaries who had fought for Antony and young

Octavianus against Pompey. Cremona had espoused the cause of the latter, and Mantua, as Virgil himself tells us, suffered for the sins of its neighbour. His little estate was confiscated, amongst others, to reward the veterans who had claims on the gratitude of Octavianus. But through the intercession of some powerful friend who had influence with the young emperor—probably Asinius Pollio, hereafter mentioned, who was prefect of the province—they were soon restored to him. This obligation Virgil never forgot; and amongst the many of all ranks who poured their flattery into the ears of Augustus (as Octavianus must be henceforth called), perhaps that of the young Mantuan poet, though bestowed with something of a poet's exaggeration, was amongst the most sincere. The first of his Pastorals was written to express his gratitude for the indulgence which had been granted him. If the Cæsar of the day was susceptible of flattery, at least he liked it good of its kind. "Stroke him awkwardly," said Horace, "and he winces like a restive horse." But the verse of the Mantuan poet had the ring of poetry as well as compliment.

These Pastorals (to be more particularly noticed hereafter) were his earliest work, composed, probably, between his twenty-seventh and thirty-fourth year, while he was still living a country life on his newly recovered farm. They seem to have attracted the favourable attention of Mæcenas; and soon, among the brilliant crowd of courtiers, statesmen, artists, poets, and historians who thronged the audience-chamber of the popular minister, might be seen the

tall, slouching, somewhat plebeian figure of the young country poet.* He soon became a familiar guest there; but although Augustus himself, half in jest, was said to have spoken of his minister's literary dinners as a "table of parasites," it is certain Virgil never deserved the character. This intimacy with Mæcenâs must have led to frequent and prolonged visits to Rome; but his chief residence, after he left his Mantuan estate, seems to have been at Naples. It was at the suggestion of this patron that he set about the composition of his poem upon Roman agriculture and stock-breeding—the four books of *Georgics*. His greatest and best-known work—the *Æneid*—was begun in obedience to a hint thrown out by a still higher authority, though he seems to have long had the subject in his thoughts, and probably had begun to put it into shape. Augustus had condescended to ask the poet to undertake some grander theme than an imaginary pastoral life or the management of the country farm. The result was the *Æneid*, modelled upon the two great poems of Homer—in fact, a Roman *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined in one. It was never completely finished, for Virgil, whose health was at no time robust, died before he had put in the finishing touches which his fastidious taste required. It is even said that in his last illness he would have burnt the copy, if his friends would have allowed the sacrifice. It is hardly

* It has been thought that the friend of whom Horace speaks (*Sat.* I. 3, 31), under whose somewhat slovenly dress and rustic bearing lay hid so much talent and worth, may have been Virgil.

probable, as a German scholar has ingeniously suggested, that it was because the cruelties of Augustus's later years made him repent of having immortalised a tyrant. He died in his fifty-first year, at Brundisium, where he had landed in the suite of the emperor, whom he had met during a visit to Athens, and who brought him back with him to Italy. He was buried, as was the custom of the Romans, by the side of the public road leading out of Naples to Puteoli; and the tomb still shown to travellers, near Posilippo, as the last resting-place of the poet, may at least mark the real site. He died a comparatively rich man, possessed of a town-house at Rome, near the palace of Mæcenas, with a good library. Living, as he did, in the highest society of the capital, where he was very popular, he never forgot his old friends; and it is pleasant to read that he sent money to his aged parents regularly every year. So highly was he esteemed by his own contemporaries, that on one occasion when he visited the theatre, the whole audience is said to have risen in a body and saluted him with the same honours which were paid to Augustus. He preserved to the last his simple manners and somewhat rustic appearance; and it is believed that his character, amongst all the prevalent vices of Rome, remained free from reproach—saving only that with which he was taunted by the libertines of the capital, the reproach of personal purity. It is as much to his honour that Caligula should have ordered all his busts to be banished from the public libraries, as that St Augustin should have quoted him alone of heathen authors, in his celebrated 'Confessions.'

THE PASTORALS.

THE earliest written poems of Virgil, as has been said, were his Pastorals. Of these we have ten remaining, sometimes called "Bucolics"—*i. e.*, Songs of the Herdsmen—and sometimes "Eclogues," as being "selections" from a larger number of similar compositions which the poet either never made public, or which at least are lost to us. The actual subjects of these poems are various, but they are usually introduced in the way of imaginary dialogue between Greek shepherds, keeping their flocks and herds at pasture in some imaginary woodland country, which the poet peoples with inhabitants and supplies with scenery at his will; mixing up, as poets only may, the features of his own Italian landscape with those of Sicily, borrowed, with much besides, from the Idylls of Theocritus, and with reminiscences of the Greek Arcadia. That pastoral faery-land, in which shepherds lay all day under beech-trees, playing on their pipes, either in rivalry for a musical prize or composing monodies on their lost loves, surely never existed in fact, how-

ever familiar to us in the language of ancient and modern poets. Such shepherds are as unreal as the satyrs and fauns and dryad-nymphs with whom a fanciful mythology had peopled the same region, and who are not unfrequently introduced by the pastoral poets in the company of their human *dramatis personæ*. The Arcadia of history was a rich and fertile district, well wooded and watered, and as prosaic as one of our own midland counties. Like them, if it had any reputation at all beyond that of being excellent pasture-ground, it was a reputation for dulness. It was celebrated for its breed of asses, and some of the qualities of the animal seem to have been shared by the natives themselves. "A slip of Arcadia" passed into a proverbial nickname for a boy who was the despair of his schoolmaster. The Arcadia of the poets and romance-writers, from classical times down to our own Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney, was, as Mr Conington says, "the poets' golden land, in which imagination found a refuge from the harsh prosaic life of the present." This literary fancy enjoyed a remarkable popularity from the early days of authorship down to a very recent date. Thyrsis and Amaryllis, Daphnis and Corydon, have had a continued poetical existence of something like fifteen hundred years, and talk very much the same language in the Pastorals of Pope that they did in the Greek Idylls. It is curious, also, that when society itself has been most artificial, this affectation of pastoral simplicity seems to have been most in vogue. It was the effeminate courtiers of Augustus who lavished their applause and rewards upon Virgil when

he read to them these lays of an imaginary shepherd-life ; how Galatæa was won by a present of a pair of wood-pigeons or a basket of apples, and how Melibœus thankfully went to supper with his friend Tityrus on roasted chestnuts and goat-milk cheese. Society in England had never less of the reality of pastoral simplicity than in the days when nearly every fine lady chose to be painted with a lamb or a crook—when the “*bucolic cant*,” as Warton contemptuously terms it, was the fashionable folly of the day. So when aristocratic life in France had reached a phase of corruption which was only to be purged by a revolution, Queen Marie Antoinette, with her ladies and gentlemen in waiting, were going about the farm at Trianon with crooks in their hands, playing at shepherds and shepherdesses, on the brink of that terrible volcano.

Of the ten Eclogues, the majority take the form of pastoral dialogue. Frequently it is a singing-match between two rival shepherds—not always conducted in the most amicable fashion, or with the most scrupulous delicacy in the matter of repartee, the poetical “*Arcadian*” being in this point a pretty faithful copy from nature. Most of the names, as well as of the subjects and imagery, are taken, as has been said, from the Greek Idylls of Theocritus. So closely has Virgil copied his model that he even transplants the natural scenery of Sicily, employed by Theocritus, to his pastoral dreamland, which otherwise would seem to be localised on the banks of the Mincio, in the neighbourhood of his native Mantua. This gives him an

opportunity of touching upon subjects of the day, and introducing, in the name and guise of shepherds, himself and his friends. Sometimes we can see through the disguise by the help of contemporary Roman history; more often, probably, the clue is lost to us through our very imperfect modern knowledge. We know pretty well that Tityrus,—who in the First Eclogue expresses his gratitude to the “godlike youth” who has preserved his little farm from the ruthless hands of the soldier colonists, while his poor neighbour Melibœus has lost his all,—can be no other than the poet himself, who thus compliments his powerful protector. So, too, in a later Eclogue, when the slave Moëris meets his neighbour Lycidas on the road, and tells him how his master has been dispossessed of his farm by the military colonists, and has narrowly escaped with his life, we may safely trust the traditional explanation, that in the master Menalcas we have Virgil again, troubled a second time by these intruders, and compelled to renew his application to his great friend at Rome. The traditional story was, that the poet was obliged to take refuge from the violence of the soldiers in the shop of a charcoal-burner, who let him out at a back-door, and eventually had to throw himself into the river Mincio to escape their pursuit. Lycidas, in the Pastoral, is surprised to hear of his neighbour’s new trouble.

“LYC.—I surely heard, that all from where yon hills
Begin to rise, and gently slope again
Down to the stream, where the old beech-trees
throw

Their ragged time-worn tops against the sky,*
Your poet-master had redeemed by song.

MÆR.—You heard, no doubt—and so the story went;
But song, good Lycidas, avails as much,
When swords are drawn, as might the trembling
dove
When on Dodona swoops the eagle down.
Nay—had I not been warned of woes to come—
Warned by a raven's croak on my left hand
From out the hollow oak—why then, my friend,
You had lost your Mœris and his master too."

Honest Lycidas expresses his horror at the narrow escape of the neighbourhood from such a catastrophe. What should they all have done for a poet, if they had lost Menalcas? who could compose such songs—and who could sing them? And he breaks out himself into fragmentary reminiscences which he has picked up by ear from his friend. Then Mœris too—who, being a poet's farm-servant, has caught a little of the inspiration—repeats a few lines of his master's. "As you hope for any blessings," says Lycidas, "let me hear the rest of it."

"So may your bees avoid the poisonous yew—
So may your cows bring full-swoln udders home—
If canst remember aught, begin at once. I too,
I am a poet, by the Muses' grace: some songs
I have, mine own composing; and the swains
Call me their bard—but I were weak to heed them.
I cannot vie with masters of the art

* It is not difficult to believe that in the old time-worn beeches overhanging the stream we have the actual landscape of the poet's farm.

Like Varius or like Cinna ; my poor Muse
Is but a goose among the tuneful swans."

Mœris can remember a scrap or two of his master's verses. There was one in particular, which Lycidas had heard him singing one moonlight night, and would much like to hear again ;—" I can remember the tune myself," he says, " but I have forgotten the words." Mœris will try. The compliment to Augustus with which the strain begins sufficiently marks the real poet who here figures as Menalcas.

" Why, Daphnis, why dost watch the constellations
Of the old order, now the new is born ?
Lo ! a new star comes forth to glad the nations,
Star of the Cæsars, filling full the corn." *

But Mœris cannot remember much more. They must both wait, he says, until his master comes home again. So the pair walk on together towards Rome, cheating the long journey with singing as they go ; and thus closes this pretty pastoral dialogue, the graceful ease of which, with its subdued comedy, it would be impossible for any translator to render adequately.

Another of these Eclogues relates the capture of Silenus, one of the old rural deities of very jovial reputation, by two young shepherds, while he lay sleeping off the effect of yesterday's debauch. He is com-

* Probably the comet which appeared after Julius Cæsar's death, and which the poet takes to announce a new era of peace and happiness for Rome. The English reader may remember that a new star was said to have appeared at the accession of Charles II., from which equally happy auguries were drawn—and were equally disappointed.

monly represented—and he was rather a favourite subject with ancient artists—as a corpulent bald-headed old man, riding upon an ass, in a state of evident inebriety, carrying a capacious leather wine-bottle, and led and followed by a company of Nymphs and Bacchanals. He had the reputation, like the sea-god Proteus, of knowing the mysteries of nature and the secrets of the future; and there was a current story, upon which this Pastoral is founded, of his having been caught while asleep, like him, by some shepherds in Phrygia, and carried to King Midas, to whom, as the price of his release, he answered all questions in natural philosophy and ancient history—just as Proteus unfolded to Menelaus, under similar compulsion, the secret of his future fate.

The Pastoral into which Virgil introduces this story is addressed to his friend Varus—a man evidently of high rank—and seems meant as an apology for not complying with his request to write a poem on his exploits.

“I thought to sing how heroes fought and bled,
But that Apollo pinched my ear, and said—
‘Shepherds, friend Tityrus, I would have you know,
Feed their sheep high, and keep their verses low.’”

Then he goes on to tell his story :—

“Two shepherd-youths, the story runs, one day
Came on the cave where old Silenus lay;
Filled to the skin, as was his wont to be,
With last night’s wine, and sound asleep was he;
The garland from his head had fallen aside,
And his round bottle hanging near they spied.

Now was their time—both had been cheated long
 By the sly god with promise of a song ;
 They tied him fast—fit bonds his garland made—
 And lo ! a fair accomplice comes to aid :
 Loveliest of Naiad-nymphs, and merriest too,
 Æglè * did what they scarce had dared to do ;
 Just as the god unclosed his sleepy eyes,
 She daubed his face with blood of mulberries.
 He saw their joke, and laughed—‘ Now loose me, lad !
 Enough—you’ve caught me—tying is too bad.
 A song you want ?—Here goes. For Æglè, mind,
 I warrant me I’ll pay her out in kind.
 So he began. The listening Fauns drew near,
 The beasts beat time, the stout oaks danced to hear.
 So joys Parnassus when Apollo sings—
 So through the dancing hills the lyre of Orpheus rings.”

Silenus’s strain is a poetical lecture on natural philosophy. He is as didactic in his waking soberness as some of his disciples are in their cups. He describes how the world sprang from the four original elements, and narrates the old fables of the cosmogonists—the Deluge of Deucalion, the new race of men who sprang from the stones which he and Pyrrha cast behind them, the golden reign of Saturn, the theft of fire by Prometheus, and a long series of other legends, with which he charms his listeners until the falling shadows warn them to count their flocks, and the evening-star comes out, as the poet phrases it, “ over the unwilling heights of Olympus ”—loath yet to lose the fascinating strain.

Besides this Pastoral addressed to Varus, there are

* *Anglicè*, “ Bright-eyes.”

three inscribed to other friends: one to Cornelius Gallus, and two to Caius Asinius Pollio, who was among the most eminent men of his day alike as a statesman, an orator, and a man of letters, and at that time held the high office of consul at Rome. He had been the friend of the great Julius, as he was afterwards of his nephew Octavianus (Augustus), and was probably the person who preserved or restored to the poet his country estate. The fourth in order of these poems, commonly known as the "Pollio," is the most celebrated of the whole series, and has given rise to a great amount of speculation. Its exact date is known from the record of Pollio's consulship—40 before the Christian era. Its subject is the expected birth of a Child, in whom the golden age of innocence and happiness should be restored, and who was to be the moral regenerator of the world. The date of the poem itself, approaching so closely the great Birth at Bethlehem—the reference to the prophecy of the Cumæan Sibyl, long supposed to be a voice from heathendom predictive of the Jewish Messiah—and the remarkable coincidence of the metaphorical terms employed by the poet with the prophetic language of the Old Testament, have led many to the pious belief that the Roman poet did but put into shape those vague expectations of a Great Deliverer which were current in his day, and which were to have a higher fulfilment than he knew. The "Pollio" may be familiar to many English readers who are unacquainted with the original through Pope's fine imitation of it in his poem of "The Messiah," first published anonymously in the

'Spectator.'* But as the Latin Eclogue itself is short, it may be well to attempt a translation of it here, before remarking further upon its meaning.

“Muses of Sicily, lift me for once
To higher flight ; our humble tamarisk groves
Delight not all ; and though the fields and woods
Still bound my song, give me the skill to make
Fit music for a Roman consul's ear.

“Comes the Last Age, of which the Sibyl sang—
A new-born cycle of the rolling years ;
Justice returns to earth, the rule returns
Of good King Saturn ;—lo ! from the high heavens
Comes a new seed of men. Lucina chaste,
Speed the fair infant's birth, with whom shall end
Our age of iron, and the golden prime
Of earth return ; thine own Apollo's reign
In him begins anew. This glorious age
Inaugurates, O Pollio, with thee ;
Thy consulship shall date the happy months ;
Under thine auspices the Child shall purge
Our guilt-stains out, and free the land from dread.
He with the gods and heroes like the gods
Shall hold familiar converse, and shall rule
With his great father's spirit the peaceful world.
For thee, O Child, the earth untilled shall pour
Her early gifts,—the winding ivy's wreath,
Smiling acanthus, and all flowers that blow.
She-goats undriven shall bring full udders home,
The herds no longer fear the lion's spring ;
The ground beneath shall cradle thee in flowers,
The venom'd snake shall die, the poisonous herb
Perish from out thy path, and leave the almond there.

“But when with growing years the Child shall learn
The old heroic glories of his race,

And know what Honour means : then shall the plains
Glow with the yellow harvest silently,
The grape hang blushing from the tangled brier,
And the rough oak drip honey like a dew.
Yet shall some evil leaven of the old strain
Lurk still unpurged ; still men shall tempt the deep
With restless oar, gird cities with new walls,
And cleave the soil with ploughshares ; yet again
Another Argo bear her hero-crew,
Another Tiphys steer : still wars shall be,
A new Achilles for a second Troy.

"So, when the years shall seal thy manhood's strength,
The busy merchant shall forsake the seas—
Barter there shall not need ; the soil shall bear
For all men's use all products of all climes.
The glebe shall need no harrow, nor the vine
The searching knife, the oxen bear no yoke ;
The wool no longer shall be schooled to lie,
Dyed in false hues ; but, colouring as he feeds,
The ram himself in the rich pasture-lands
Shall wear a fleece now purple and now gold,
And the lambs grow in scarlet. So the Fates
Who know not change have bid their spindles run,
And weave for this blest age the web of doom.

"Come, claim thine honours, for the time draws nigh,
Babe of immortal race, the wondrous seed of Jove !
Lo, at thy coming how the starry spheres
Are moved to trembling, and the earth below,
And widespread seas, and the blue vault of heaven !
How all things joy to greet the rising Age !
If but my span of life be stretched to see
Thy birth, and breath remain to sing thy praise,
Not Thracian Orpheus should o'ermatch my strain,
Nor Linus,—though each parent helped the son,
Phœbus Apollo and the Muse of Song :
Though in Arcadia Pan my rival stood,

His own Arcadia should pronounce for me.
How soon, fair infant, shall thy first smile greet
Thy happy mother, when the slow months crown
The heart-sick hopes that waited for thy birth?
Smile then, O Babe! so shall she smile on thee;
The child on whom no parent's smile hath beamed,
No god shall entertain, nor goddess love."

It would be out of place here to discuss the various conjectures of the learned as to who the Child was, to whose birth the poet thus looks forward. Whether it was a son of the Consul Pollio himself, who died in his infancy; or the expected offspring of Augustus's marriage with Scribonia, which was, after all, a daughter—Julia—whose profligate life and unhappy death were a sad contradiction of Virgil's anticipations; or a child of Octavia, sister of Augustus;—which of these it was, or whether it was any one of them, neither ancient nor modern commentators have been able to decide. "It is not certain," says Mr Conington, "that the child ever was born; it is certain that, if born, he did not become the regenerator of his time." It is possible, too, that the whole form of the poem may be strictly imaginary—that the child had been born already, long ago, and that it was no other than Octavianus Cæsar—and that Virgil does but use here the licence of poetry to express his hopes of a golden age that might follow the peace of Brundisium. And as to how far this very remarkable poem may or may not be regarded as one of what Archbishop Trench has called "the unconscious prophecies of heathendom," would be to open a field of inquiry of the

highest interest indeed, but far too wide for these pages. Yet it cannot be entirely passed over.

The Sibylline oracles, to which Virgil alludes in his opening lines, whatever their original form, were so garbled and interpolated, both in Christian and pre-Christian times, that it is impossible now to know what they did or did not contain. But they were recognised, in the early Church—by the Emperor Constantine, who is said to have attributed his own conversion in great part to their study, and by St Augustine, amongst others—as containing distinct prophecies of the Messiah. The recognition of the Roman Sibyl or Sibyls as bearing their testimony to the truth of Christianity is still familiar to us in the ancient hymn, "Dies Iræ,"—so often translated—

"Teste David cum Sibylla ;"

and in an old Latin mystery-play of the eleventh century, when the witnesses are summoned to give evidence as to the Nativity, there appear among them, in company with the Hebrew prophets, Virgil and the Sibyl, who both join in a general "*Benedicamus Domino*" at the end. St Augustine quotes twenty-seven Latin verses (which, however, seem very fragmentary and unconnected) as actual utterances of the Sibyl of Erythræ, which contain prophecies, more or less clear, of the great Advent. The original, he says, was in Greek, and the initial letters of each verse formed a sentence, "Jesus Christ the Son of God the Saviour."* Whatever truth there may be in any

* ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡ. He also quotes

special predictions of this nature as existing in the heathen world, it is at least certain that there prevailed very largely, about the date of the Christian era, a vague expectation of some personal advent which should in some way regenerate society.

The new "cycle of centuries," which the poet supposes to begin with the birth of the Child, refers to the doctrine held by Plato and his disciples (possibly of Etruscan origin) of an "Annus Magnus," or Great Year. It was believed that there were certain recurring periods at long intervals, in which the history of the world repeated itself.* A curious story in illustration of this belief is told by Plutarch in his life of Sulla.

"While the horizon was clear and cloudless, there was heard suddenly the sound of a trumpet, shrill, prolonged, and as it were wailing, so that all men were startled and awed by its loudness. The Etruscan soothsayers declared that it foreboded the coming of a new generation and the revolution of the world. For that there were eight generations of man in all, differing from each other in habits and ways of life, and each had its allotted space of time, when heaven brought round again the recurrence of the Great Year, and that when the end of one and the rise of another was at hand, some wondrous sign appeared in earth or heaven."—PLUTARCH, *Sulla*, c. 7.

Enough has perhaps been said to give some idea of the genius and character of Virgil's pastoral poetry.

other "Sibylline" verses from the Greek of Lactantius, referring to the crucifixion.—*De Civ. Dei*, xviii. 23.

* The duration is variously estimated—from 2489 to 18,000 years. See Conington's note.

It laid the foundation of a taste which was long prevalent in European literature, but which may be said to have now become obsolete. English poets were at one time strongly imbued with it. Spenser, Milton, Drayton, Pope, and Ambrose Phillips,—the last perhaps the most successful,—were all more or less imitators of Virgil in this line of poetry. But it would seem to require a more than ordinary revolution in literature ever to bring such a style into popularity again.

THE GEORGICS.

THE Georgics of Virgil, like his Pastorals, are a direct and confessed imitation from Greek originals. The poem of Hesiod—"Works and Days"—which has come down to us, though apparently in an incomplete form, gives a mythological sketch of the early history of the world, with its five ages of the human race—the gold, the silver, the brazen, "the age of heroes," and the present—which last, with the cynicism or melancholy which seems so inseparable from the poetic temperament, Hesiod looks upon as hopelessly degenerate, with the prospect of something even worse to come. To this traditional cosmogony the Greek poet adds directions as to farm operations in their several seasons, and notes of lucky and unlucky days. Virgil has borrowed from him largely on these two latter subjects. He is also considerably indebted to other Greek writers less known to us, and in whose case, therefore, his obligations are not so readily traced.

From his own countryman and immediate predecessor, Lucretius, the author of the great didactic poem

“On the Nature of Things,” he drew quite as largely, but in another field. Virgil is said to have been born on the very day of Lucretius’s death, and he had an intense admiration for both his diction and his philosophy. There are passages in Virgil’s writings which would seem to show that his greatest ambition would have been to have sung, like Lucretius, of the secrets of nature, rather than either of heroic legends or of country life. And here and there, throughout these books of Georgics, wherever he has the opportunity, he forgets the farmer in the natural philosopher, and breaks off in the midst of some practical precepts to indulge in speculations on the hidden causes of nature’s operations, which would have sorely puzzled a Roman country gentleman or his bailiff, if we could suppose that the work was really composed with a view to their practical instruction.

He addresses his poem to his noble patron Mæcenas. And amongst the long list of divine powers whom, as the guardians of fields and flocks, he invokes to aid his song, he introduces the present Autocrat of Rome.

“Thou, Cæsar, chief, where’er thy choice ordain,
To fix ’mid gods thy yet unchosen reign—
Wilt thou o’er cities stretch thy guardian sway,
While earth and all her realms thy nod obey?
The world’s vast orb shall own thy genial power,
Giver of fruits, fair sun, and favouring shower;
Before thy altar grateful nations bow,
And with maternal myrtle wreath thy brow.
O’er boundless ocean shall thy power prevail,
Thee her sole lord the world of waters hail?

Rule, where the sea remotest Thule laves,
While Tethys dowers thy bride with all her waves ?
Wilt thou 'mid Scorpius and the Virgin rise,
And, a new star, illumine thy native skies ?
Scorpius, e'en now, each shrinking claw confines,
And more than half his heaven to thee resigns.
Where'er thy reign (for not if hell invite
To wield the sceptre of eternal night,
Ne'er would such lust of dire dominion move
Thee, Cæsar, to resign the realm of Jove :
Though vaunting Greece extol th' Elysian plain,
Whence weeping Ceres woos her child in vain)
Breathe favouring gales, my course propitious guide,
O'er the rude swain's uncertain path preside ;
Now, now invoked, assert thy heavenly birth,
And learn to hear our prayers, a god on earth."

—SOTHEY.

The first book is devoted to the raising of corn crops. The farmer is recommended to plough early, to plough deep, and to plough four times over—advice in the principles of which modern farmers would cordially agree. The poet also recommends fallows at least every other season, and not to take two corn crops in successive years. The Roman agriculturist had his pests of the farm, and complained of them as loudly as his modern fellows. The geese, and the cranes, and the mice, and the small birds, vexed him all in turn ; and if he knew nothing of that distinctly English torment, the couch-grass,—squitch, twitch, or quitch, as it is variously termed, which is said to spring up under the national footstep wherever it goes, whether at the Cape or in Australia,—he had indigenous weeds of his own which gave him equal trouble to get rid of. The

Roman plough seems to have been a cumbrous wooden instrument, which would break the heart alike of man and horse in these days; and its very elaborate description, in spite of the polished language of the poet, would shock one of our modern implement-manufacturers. He gives a few hints as to lucky and unlucky days, and fuller directions for prognosticating the weather from the various signs to be observed in the sky, and in the behaviour of the animal world; and he closes this first division of his poem, as he began it, with an apostrophe to Cæsar as the hope of Rome and Italy. It is one of the finest passages in the Georgics, and will bear translation as well as most. Dryden's version is spirited enough, and though diffuse, presents the sense fairly to an English ear:—

“Ye home-born deities, of mortal birth!
Thou, father Romulus, and mother Earth,
Goddess unmoved! whose guardian arms extend
O'er Tuscan Tiber's course, and Roman towers defend;
With youthful Cæsar your joint powers engage,
Nor hinder him to save the sinking age.
O! let the blood already spilt atone
For the past crimes of curst Laomedon!
Heaven wants thee there; and long the gods, we know,
Have grudged thee, Cæsar, to the world below;
Where fraud and rapine right and wrong confound;
Where impious arms from every part resound,
And monstrous crimes in every shape are crowned.
The peaceful peasant to the wars is prest.
The fields lie fallow in inglorious rest:
The plain no pasture to the flock affords,
The crooked scythes are straightened into swords:

And there Euphrates her soft offspring arms,
And here the Rhine rebellows with alarms ;
The neighbouring cities range on several sides,
Perfidious Mars long-plighted leagues divides,
And o'er the wasted world in triumph rides.
So four fierce coursers, starting to the race,
Scour through the plain, and lengthen every pace :
Nor reins, nor curbs, nor threat'ning cries they fear,
But force along the trembling charioteer."

The Second Georgic treats of the orchard and the vineyard, but especially of the latter. The apple, the pear, the olive, all receive due notice from the poet ; but upon the culture of the vine he dwells with a hearty enthusiasm, and his precepts have a more practical air than those which he gives out upon other branches of cultivation. The soil, the site, the best kinds to choose, the different modes of propagation, are all discussed with considerable minuteness. It would seem that in those earlier times, as now, the vintage had a more poetical aspect than even the harvest-field. The beauty of the crop, the merriment of the gatherers, the genial effects of the grape when it has gone through the usual process of conversion, gave, as is still the case in all wine-producing countries, a holiday character to the whole course of cultivation. All other important crops contribute in some way to supply the actual needs of life : the vine alone represents distinctly its enjoyments. And when, at the beginning of the book, the poet invokes the god of wine to inspire his song, he does it with a thorough heartiness of welcome which assures us that, however temperate his own habits might be, he had not

adopted any vow of total abstinence. Some of the ancient critics are said to have detected in Homer a taste for joviality, because in his verse he had always a kindly word for "the dark red wine:" they might have said the same of the writer of the Georgics. It is a cordial invitation which he gives to the jolly god:—

"Come, Father Bacchus, come ! thy bounty fills
All things around ; for thee the autumn hills,
Heavy with fruit, blush through their greenery ;
In the full vats the vintage foams for thee :
Come, Father Bacchus, come ! nor yet refuse
To doff thy buskins, and with noble juice
To stain thy limbs, and tread the grapes with me."

But although the poet makes the labours of the gardener and the vine-dresser the burden of his song, his most brilliant passages, and those best known and remembered, are the frequent digressions in which he breaks away from the lower ground of horticultural details into a higher poetical atmosphere. One of the most beautiful is his apostrophe to Italy in this second book :—

"Colchian bulls with fiery nostrils never turned Italian field,
Seed of hydra's teeth ne'er sprang in bristling crop of spear
and shield ;
But thy slopes with heavy corn-stalks and the Massic vine
are clad,
There the olive-groves are greenest, and the full-fed herds
are glad.
In thy plains is bred the war-horse, tossing high its crest
of pride ;
Milk-white herds, O fair Clitumnus, bathe them in thy
sacred tide—

Mighty bulls to crown the altars, or to draw the conqueror's
car

Up the Sacred Way in triumph when he rideth from the war
Here the spring is longest, summer borrows months be-
yond her own ;

Twice the teeming flocks are fruitful, twice the laden or-
chards groan.

In thy plains no tigers wander, nor the lions nurse their
young ;

Evil root of treacherous poison doth no wretched gatherer
wrong,

Never serpent rears its crest, or drags its monstrous coils
along.

Lo ! where rise thy noble cities, giant works of men of old,
Towns on beetling crags piled heavenward by the hands of
builders bold—

Antique towers round whose foundations still the grand old
rivers glide,

And the double sea that girds thee like a fence on either side.

Such the land which sent to battle Marsian footmen stout
and good,

Sabine youth, and Volscian spearmen, and Liguria's hardy
brood ;

Hence have sprung our Decii, Marii, mighty names which
all men bless,

Great Camillus, kinsmen Scipios, sternest men in battle's
press !

Hence hast thou too sprung, great Cæsar, whom the farth-
est East doth fear,

So that Mede nor swarthy Indian to our Roman lines come
near !

Hail, thou fair and fruitful mother, land of ancient Saturn,
hail !

Rich in crops and rich in heroes ! thus I dare to wake the
talo

Of thine ancient laud and honour, opening founts that
slumbered long,
Rolling through our Roman towns the echoes of old
Hesiod's song." *

The Third Georgic treats of the herd and the stud. The poet's knowledge on these points must be strongly suspected of being but second-hand—rather the result of having studied some of the Roman "Books of the Farm," than the experience of a practical stock-breeder. Such a work was Varro's 'On Rural Affairs,' which Virgil evidently followed as an authority. From that source he drew, amongst other precepts, the points of a good cow, which he lays down in this formula :—

"An ugly head, a well-fleshed neck,
Deep dewlaps falling from the chin,
Long in the flank, broad in the foot,
Rough hairy ears, and horns bent in."

Such an animal would hardly win a prize from our modern judges of stock. But Virgil, be it remembered, is giving instructions for selection with an eye to breeding purposes exclusively; and an Italian cow of the present day would not be considered by us a handsome animal. Besides, the object of the Roman breeder was to obtain animals which would be "strong to labour,"—good beasts under the yoke; not such as would lay on the greatest weight of flesh at the least

* This fine passage—much of the beauty of which is necessarily lost in this attempt at a translation—has been often imitated, not least successfully by Thomson, in the eulogy upon his native island with which he begins the fifth book of his poem on "Liberty."

possible cost, for the purposes of the butcher. His points of a good horse are entirely different, and approach more nearly our own ideal—"Fine in the head, short in the barrel, broad on the back, full in the chest." Bay and dapple-grey he chooses for colour; white and chestnut he considers the worst. He had not reached the more catholic philosophy of the modern horse-dealer, that "no good horse was ever yet of a bad colour."

The nature of the subject in this Third Georgic allows the poet to indulge even more frequently in digressions. He gives a picture of pastoral life under the hot suns of Numidia, where the herdsman or shepherd drives his charge from pasture to pasture, carrying with him all he wants, like a Roman soldier in a campaign; and again of his winter life in some vague northern region which he calls by the general name of Scythia, but where they seem to have drunk (in imitation of wine, as the southern poet compassionately phrases it) some kind of beer or cider. But the most remarkable of these passages is that which closes the book, and describes the ravages of some terrible pestilence which, beginning with the flocks and herds, extended at last to the wild beasts and to the birds, and even to the fish. There is no historical account of such a visitation in Italy; and it is very probable that Virgil used his licence as a poet to embellish with imaginary details some ordinary epidemic, in order to present to his readers a companion picture to that of the great plague at Athens, which had been so powerfully described by his favourite model Lucretius.

There is no need to say very much about the Fourth and last of the Georgics, which treats exclusively of bees. These little creatures were evidently of more importance in the rural economy of the Romans than they commonly are in ours. Before the discovery of the sugar-cane, the sweetening properties of honey would be much more valuable than they are now ; and the inhabitants of a warm climate like Italy make more use of saccharine matter, as an article of ordinary food, than we do. But the habits and natural history of the insect commonwealth to which Virgil devotes this book are so curious and so little understood, that they would only find an appropriate place in a special treatise. There appears to have been no want of interest or research upon the subject among the ancients, for the Greek philosopher Aristomachus is said to have devoted fifty-eight years to this single branch of zoology. Virgil certainly would not help us much in a scientific point of view. The bees were mysteries to him, even more than to us ; and, marvellous as they are, he made them more marvellous still. He was quite aware that they had some peculiarities in the matter of sex ; but he makes the queen bee, who is really the mother of the swarm, a king, and imagines that they pick up their young ones from the leaves and flowers. He gives also—and with an air of as much practical reality as can be expected from a poet—minute instructions for obtaining a stock of bees at once from the carcass of a steer, beaten and crushed into a mass, and excluded from air : evidently a misapplication of what is said to be a

fact in natural history, that bees will take up their quarters occasionally in the dead body of an animal. The honey he considers to be some kind of dew that falls from heaven. One rule which he gives for preventing the young swarms from rising at undue times has staggered some inexperienced commentators. He advises the owner to pick out the queen bees, and clip their wings. Such a recipe certainly suggests at first sight the old preliminary caution—"First *catch* your bee:" but an experienced bee-keeper will find no difficulty in performing such an operation, if needful.*

The fine episode with which this book concludes, in which the poet relates the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice, is more attractive than all his discourse upon bee-keeping.

The Georgics have generally been considered as the poet's most complete work, and it is here, undoubtedly, that he shows us most of himself,—of his habits, his tastes, and his religious opinions. They are poetical essays on the dignity of labour. Warlike glory was the popular theme of the day; but Virgil detests war, and he seeks to enthrone labour in its place. He looks upon tillage as, in some sort, a war in itself, but of a nobler kind—"a holy war of men against the earth," as a French writer expresses it.† He compares its details, in more than one passage, with those

* When we find, in a modern manual, even directions "How to tame vicious bees," it is hard to say what a master of bee-craft can *not* do. —See Mr Pettigrew's clever and amusing 'Handy Book.'

† Jules Legris.

of the camp and of the battle-field. But besides this, the Georgics contain what seems to be a protest against the fashionable atheism of his age. He sets the worship of the gods in the first place of all.

“First, pay all reverence to the Powers of heaven”—

is his instruction to his pupils—“From Jove all things begin.” His motto might have been that which the Benedictines in their purer days adopted—“Ora et labora”—“Pray and work.” It has been commonly said that Virgil was in his creed an Epicurean; that he looked upon the gods as beings who, in our English poet’s words,

“Lie beside their nectar, careless of mankind.”

But a study of his writings will go far to show that such is not the case; that whatever the distinct articles of his creed may have been, he had a deep individual sense of the personal existence of great powers which ruled the affairs of men; that Nature was not to him, as to Lucretius, a mere shrine of hidden mysteries, unlocked to the Epicurean alone, but that he had an eye and a heart for all its riches and beauties, as the “skirts” of a divine glory. In all his verse this feeling shows itself, but nowhere more plainly than in the Georgics.

It is said that this particular work was undertaken by the desire of Mæcenas, with the hope of turning the minds of the veteran soldiers, to whom grants of land had been made in return for their services, to a more peaceful ambition in the quiet cultivation of their

farms. Whether it had that result may well be doubted: the discharged soldier, however heartily he might take to farming, would scarcely go to a poet as his instructor. The practical influence of these treatises in any way is equally doubtful. "It would be absurd to suppose," says Dean Merivale, "that Virgil's verses induced any Roman to put his hand to the plough, or take from his bailiff the management of his own estates; but they served undoubtedly to revive some of the simple tastes and sentiments of the olden time, and perpetuated, amid the vices and corruptions of the Empire, a pure stream of sober and innocent enjoyment." *

* 'Fall of Rome,' iv. 576.

THE ÆNEID.

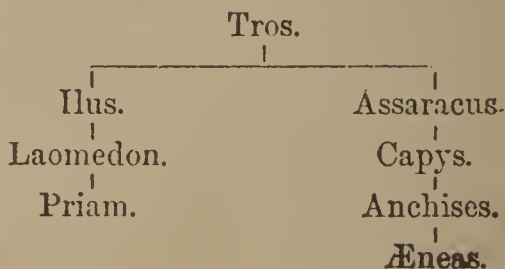
CHAPTER I.

THE SHIPWRECK ON THE COAST OF CARTHAGE.

THE Æneid, like the Iliad and Odyssey, is a Tale of Troy. The fascination of that remarkable cycle of legend had not weakened after the lapse of ten centuries. Virgil not only set himself deliberately to imitate Homer in his method of poetical treatment, but he goes to him for his subject. He even makes his own poem, in some sort, a sequel to the Iliad—at least as much so as the Odyssey is. As the subject of this latter poem is the wanderings and final establishment in his native country of the Greek hero Ulysses after victory, so Virgil gives us the story of the escape of a Trojan hero from the ruin of his city, and the perils by land and sea which he encountered, until his final settlement in the distant west, in the land which the gods had promised him. Æneas, like Ulysses, is described as a man of many woes and sufferings; and like him, though he has the justice and the deliberate counsels of heaven all on his side, the enmity of one angry deity is permitted

to vex and thwart him for many long years. This Æneas—reputed son of the goddess Venus by a mortal husband, Anchises—had played no unimportant part in the defence of Troy. Had we not been told that King Priam had no less than fifty sons, it might have been said that he stood very near the throne. For he was the representative of the younger branch of the house of Dardanus—the family of Assaracus—as Priam was of the elder branch, that of Ilus.* A sort of half-mysterious glory is cast round him in the Iliad. He is there addressed as “counsellor of the Trojans;” they honoured him, we are told, “equally with the godlike Hector;” and Neptune is made to utter a prophecy that Jupiter has rejected the house of Priam, but that “Æneas, and his sons, and his sons’ sons” should hereafter reign over the Trojans.”† Some Homeric critics have even fancied that they detected, in some passages of Homer’s poem, a jealousy between Æneas and the sons of Priam. But this surely arises from reading Homer by the light of Virgil, and thus anticipating the future turn of events, when, after the death of Hector and the fall of Priam’s kingdom, the prince of the house of Assaracus should rebuild the Trojan fortunes on the far-off shores of Italy.

* The following pedigree is mythical—as pedigrees often are :



† Iliad, xx. 306.

Like Homer, Virgil dashes at once into the heart of his story. This is how he introduces his hero :—

“Arms and the man I sing, who first,
By fate of Ilian realm amerced,
To fair Italia onward bore,
And landed on Lavinium’s shore.” *

He tells us nothing, however, for the present, of the escape from Troy and the embarkation of the fugitives, or of the guiding oracles in obedience to which they had sailed forth in quest of this new home. He only shows us Æneas on the sea, having just set sail from Sicily, where the angry Queen of Heaven catches sight of him. Juno, we must remember—Virgil, apparently, has no idea that any one could need reminding of it—Juno has never forgotten or forgiven that scene upon Mount Ida, where the Trojan Paris preferred the fascinations—or the bribes—of Venus to her own stately charms. She had persuaded her royal consort, the king of gods and men, to consent to the downfall of the accursed race ; and she persecutes this unhappy remnant, now on its voyage, with unrelenting hate. Even the poet, who makes use of her persecution as one of the mainsprings of his story, professes his astonishment at its bitterness,—

Can such deep hate find place in breasts divine ?” †

* The extracts are in all cases (where not otherwise marked) from Mr Conington’s translation, and are made with the permission of his representatives and publishers.

† Milton has translated the line almost literally :—

“In heavenly spirits could such perversion dwell ?”

—Par. Lost, vi.

She had another reason, too, for her present jealous feelings. The city of Carthage, where she was especially honoured, she had hoped to make the mistress of the world. And now—so the inexorable Fates have woven it in their web—this new brood from Troy are to destroy it in the years to come. Rome, and not Carthage, the Roman poet would thus convey to his readers, is to have this universal empire.

But they have not reached Latium yet, these hateful Trojans. They never shall. The Queen of Heaven betakes herself to the King of the Winds, where he sits enthroned in his Homeric island of Æolia, controlling his boisterous subjects :—

“ They with the rock’s reverberant roar
Chafe blustering round their prison door :
He, throned on high, the sceptre sways,
Controls their moods, their wrath allays.
Break but that sceptre, sea and land
And heaven’s ethereal deep
Before them they would whirl like sand,
And through the void air sweep.”

At Juno’s request Æolus lets loose his prisoners. Out
rush the winds in mad delight.

“ All in a moment, sun and skies
Are blotted from the Trojans’ eyes :
Black night is brooding o’er the deep,
Sharp thunder peals, live lightnings leap :
The stoutest warrior holds his breath,
And looks as on the face of death.
At once Æneas thrilled with dread ;
Forth from his breast, with hands outspread,
These groaning words he drew :

'O happy thrice, and yet again,
 Who died at Troy like valiant men,
 E'en in their parents' view !
 O Diomed, first of Greeks in fray,
 Why passed I not the plain that day,
 Yielding my life to you,
 Where, stretched beneath a Phrygian sky,
 Fierce Hector, tall Sarpedon, lie :
 Where Simois tumbles 'neath his wave
 Shields, helms, and bodies of the brave ?' "

The fleet is scattered in all directions : some ships are cast on the rocks ; one goes down with all its crew before their leader's eyes. But Neptune, the sea-god, comes to the rescue. Friendly to the Trojans, as Juno is hostile to them, he resents the interference of the King of the Winds in his dominions—he knows by whose instance he has dared this outrage. He summons the offending winds, and chides them with stern authority :—

“ Back to your master instant flee,
 And tell him, not to him but me
 The imperial trident of the sea
 Fell by the lot's award ;
 His is that prison-house of stone,
 A prison, Eurys, all your own ;
 There let him lord it to his mind,
 The jailer-monarch of the wind,
 But keep its portal barred.”

So the tempest is stilled, and Æneas, with seven ships, the survivors of his fleet of twenty, runs into a land-locked harbour on the coast of Carthage. The crews light a fire, and grind and parch their corn, while Æneas goes farther inland to reconnoitre, and kills deer to mend their meal. Wine they have good

store of—the parting gift from King Acestes, late their host in Sicily. The chief, though in sad anxiety as to the fate of his absent comrades, speaks to the rest in words of good cheer :—

“ You that have seen grim Scylla rave,
And heard her monsters yell,—
You that have looked upon the cave
Where savage Cyclops dwell,—
Come, cheer your souls, your fears forget ;
This suffering may yield us yet
A pleasant tale to tell.”

Æneas has his advocate, too, in the celestial council. His goddess-mother Venus pleads with her father Jupiter to have pity on her offspring. And Jupiter—very open to influence of this kind now, as in Homer’s story—reveals for her comfort the secrets of fate. Æneas shall reach Latium safely, and reign there three years. His son Iulus—or Ascanius, as he is otherwise called—shall succeed him, and transfer the seat of power from Lavinium to his own new-founded city, Alba Longa. Three hundred years his race shall rule there, till in due course the twin-brothers Romulus and Remus shall be born to the war-god Mars, and the elder brother shall lay the foundations of Rome. To the glories of this new capital the Father of the gods will assign neither limit nor end. The wrongs of Troy shall be redressed. The sons of the East, in their new home, shall avenge themselves on their enemies.

“ So stands my will. There comes a day,
While Rome’s great ages hold their way,
When old Assaracus’s sons
Shall quit them on the Myrmidons,

O'er Phthia and Mycenæ reign,
And humble Argos to their chain.
From Troy's fair stock shall Cæsar rise,
The limits of whose victories
Are ocean, of his fame the skies ;
Great Julius, proud that style to bear,
In name and blood Iulus' heir."

Thus, before he has concluded the first book of his great poem, the poet has taken us into his counsels as to the purport of the song. It is not a mere epic romance, in which we are to be charmed with heroic deeds and exciting adventures ; it is, like some of our modern novels, a romance with a purpose ; and the purpose is the claiming for the great house of Julius the rightful empire of Rome, and the celebration of the glories of that house in the person of Augustus. And as the *Iliad* of Homer, beyond the mere vocation of the poet to arouse and charm a warlike audience by the recital of deeds of arms, had its own purpose also—the glorification of the Greek nation—so the Roman poet may be said to have written a counter-*Iliad*, to extol the later fortunes of the royal house of Troy in the descendants, as he is pleased to imagine them, of Iulus. For any historic foundation of such a genealogy we may look in vain. King Brute stands upon much the same historical level, as the ancestor of the Britons, as can be claimed for Iulus of Troy as the founder of the Julian house and of Rome. But, for the present, we must be content to assume his existence, and to follow the course of the narrative as the poet wills. The claim of Trojan descent is not an invention of Virgil's, though he

may have been the first to work it out so much in detail. It was a claim in which his countrymen always delighted, and there were not wanting traditions in its support. Another purpose, also, Virgil seems to have at heart. He does not care so much, after all, for the subjugation of Greece and the extension of the imperial rule of Rome. The empire of Augustus is to be peace. There has been enough, and more than enough, of war. In the prognostications of the future of his nation, even here we are reminded of the strains of the "Pollio." To the soul of the Roman poet—unlike his master Homer in this—war, and more especially civil war, is absolutely hateful. He can describe it, when needed for his purpose, and describe it well ; but it is as the scourge of nations, or at best the terrible remedy for greater evils;—not, as the Greek poet calls it, "the strife which is the joy of men."

Venus loses no time in furthering, so far as she may, the counsels of Jupiter. She puts into the heart of the Queen of Carthage, on whose shores Æneas and his crews have now been cast, feelings of pity and compassion towards the shipwrecked strangers. She comes in person, also, to comfort her son Æneas in his trouble. Attended by his faithful friend Achates, he is exploring, like a careful leader, the strange coast on which he finds himself—

"When in the bosom of the wood
Before him, lo, his mother stood,
In mien and gear a Spartan maid,
Or like Harpalcè arrayed,
Who tires fleet coursers in the chase,
And heads the swiftest streams of Thrace.

Slung from her shoulders hangs a bow;
 Loose to the wind her tresses flow;
 Bare was her knee; her mantle's fold
 The gathering of a knot controlled.
 And 'Saw ye, youths,' she asks them, 'say,
 One of my sisters here astray;
 A silver quiver at her side,
 And for a scarf a lynx's hide;
 Or pressing on the wild boar's track
 With upraised dart and voiceful pack?'"

There is in this description a happy reminiscence of an earlier legend. In such guise—not with any of the meretricious attractions assigned to the goddess of Cyprus and of Paphos, but as a simple mountain nymph—had she won her mortal lover, the Trojan shepherd Anchises, from whom this her dear son was born. So ran the fable; and it was added that she had enjoined her lover never to disclose the secret of the child's birth, nor to boast of the favour shown him by a goddess, but to bring the boy up in the forests of Ida, as the offspring of a wood-nymph. Anchises, in his pride, had neglected or forgotten her warning, and was punished by premature weakness and a helpless old age.

Professing herself to be but a Tyrian damsel, Venus replies to her son's questions as to the inhabitants of the land. They are a colony from Tyre; their queen, Dido, has fled from the treachery of her false brother Pygmalion, who, after murdering her husband Sichæus, had possessed himself of the kingdom. Hither she has escaped with her husband's wealth, and is founding a new city on the coast of Africa. Æneas tells

her in return his own sad story, and is comforted by the assurance that all his fleet, though scattered, are safe—all but one unhappy vessel and her crew. Then, as she turns to leave him, the disguised divinity becomes apparent.

“Ambrosial tresses round her head
A more than earthly fragrance shed ;
Her falling robe her footsteps swept,
And showed the goddess as she stept.”

Æneas and his companion mount the crest of the hill, whence they look down upon the half-finished walls of Carthage, and the swarming bands of workmen. They are digging out the harbour, planning that most essential structure in a city of any pretension, an amphitheatre for public spectacles, and building a magnificent temple to Juno. Girt with a mist of invisibility which Venus has thrown round them,—like Ulysses in the court of Phæacia—the strangers enter the brazen gates of the temple. All is magnificent and wonderful. But, marvel of marvels! both walls and doors are sculptured with a history which Æneas knows only too well. Even here is recorded, on this distant and unknown shore, the story of stories—the Tale of Troy. With eager and tearful eyes the Trojan chief peruses the several groups, and identifies the various incidents. Here the Greeks fly to their ships, hard pressed by Hector and the Trojans: there, again, the terrible Achilles drives the Trojans in slaughter before him. The death of young Troilus, hurled from his chariot, is there; and, to match the picture. Hector dragged at Achilles's chariot-wheels round

the city walls. Memnon the Ethiopian and the amazon Penthesilea also find a place ; and there, amidst the foremost combatants, Æneas can recognise himself.

While the Trojan chief and his companion Achates are reading this sculptured history, the queen herself approaches. And while they admire her majesty and grace, conspicuous amongst all her train, lo ! the missing comrades of Æneas make their appearance before her as suppliants. They tell the story of their shipwreck on the coast : and they think Æneas is lost, as he had thought they were. Then the mist in which Venus had wrapped the hero and his comrade dissolves, and the two parties recognise and welcome each other. Dido, like all the world, has heard of the name of Æneas, and the sufferings of the heroes of Troy. She can pity such sufferings from her own bitter experience :

“ Myself not ignorant of woe,
Compassion I have learnt to show.”

The sentiment has been adopted by modern writers in all languages. “ She had suffered persecution and learnt mercy,” says Sterne in a like case : and even in Sterne’s mouth, the sentiment is natural and true.

The strangers are hospitably welcomed, and offered every facility for refitting their fleet, and preparing for the continuance of their voyage. Æneas sends down to his ships for presents worthy of so kind a hostess : and, with a father’s pride, he sends also for his young son to introduce him to the queen. The evening is devoted to feasting and revelry. The royal bard—that indispensable figure in all courts, Trojan or Tyrian or Greek—sings to the assembled guests. It is to be remarked that his lay is not, as we might expect, of

heroes and their deeds: it is the song of Silenus, in the Pastorals, over again—the favourite subject of the poet, the wonders of nature and creation.

“He sings the wanderings of the moon,
The sun eclipsed in deadly swoon;
Whence humankind and cattle came,
And whence the rain-spout and the flame,
Arcturus and the two bright bears,
And Hyads weeping showery tears;
Why winter suns so swiftly go,
And why the winter nights move slow.”

All the while, during the song and the banquet, the queen is fondling the fair boy, who sits next to her. Unhappy Dido! it is Cupid, the god of love, who, at his false mother's bidding, has assumed the shape of Æneas's young son. The true Ascanius lies fast bound in an enchanted sleep, by Venus's machinations, in her bower in the far island of Cythera; and the Tyrian queen is nursing unawares in her bosom the passion which is to be her ruin. Æneas has already become an object of tender interest to her. She hangs upon his lips, like Desdemona on Othello's:—

“Much of great Priam asks the dame,
Much of his greater son;
Now in what armour Memnon came,
Now how Achilles shone.”

Above all, she begs of him to tell his own story—his escape and his seven years' wanderings. And Æneas begins; and, with an exact imitation of Homer's management of his story, like Ulysses in the court of Alcinous, retraces his adventures from the last fatal night of Troy.

CHAPTER II.

ÆNEAS RELATES THE FALL OF TROY.

It has been said that this poem is a kind of supplement to the Iliad. Æneas tells us what was not there told by Homer, but what is presupposed in his Odyssey,—the later history of the siege and capture of Troy. He relates at length the stratagem of the Wooden Horse, by which the Greeks at last outwitted their enemies. The fleet, which had seemed to sail for home, had withdrawn, and lay concealed in the harbour of Tenedos. The wooden fabric—dedicated to Minerva, as the tale went—was left standing outside the city. It was suggested to bring it within the walls, when the priest Laocoon rushed to prevent it—suspecting some such stratagem as in truth had been contrived. He even hurled his spear against its side, and might have thus made a beginning of its destruction, when behold, a prisoner was brought in. It was the treacherous Sinon; a Greek who had undertaken to play the dangerous part of a double spy. The tale he told his captors was this: that he, though a Greek, was a fugitive from Greek vengeance—especially from the

liated Ulysses. He had been fixed upon as a victim to propitiate the offended gods; for there had come an oracle from Apollo, that as the blood of a virgin had to be shed to propitiate the gales on the expedition to Troy, so blood—that of a Greek—must purchase their return. Ulysses had contrived that Sinon should be the victim, and it was to escape this doom that he had thus fled.

The Trojans were moved to pity—they spared the traitor's life; only, in return, King Priam adjured him to tell them the true intent of the Horse. Sinon declared that the Greeks had meant to set it up themselves, an offering to Minerva, within the Trojan citadel when they should have captured it; it behoved the Trojans now to seize it and drag it within the walls: for, if this were done, then—so ran the oracles—Asia should avenge itself upon Europe, and the Greeks in their turn should be besieged in their homes.*

The traitor's tale was all too easily believed. There came, too, a fearful omen, which hurried the Trojans to adopt this false counsel. The priest Laocoon, who had dared to strike the wooden monster, was seized, while offering sacrifice to Neptune, with his two sons, by two huge sea-serpents (so old is the belief, false or true, in these apocryphal monsters), which came sailing in to the beach from the direction of Tenedos. In the description which the poet gives of their move-

* Dante in his *Inferno* punishes Sinon with an eternal sweating-sickness: a singular penalty, which is shared only by Petiphar's wife.—Inf. xxx.

ments at sea, we seem to be reading a versified extract from the log of some modern sea-captain :—

“ Amid the waves they rear their breasts,
And toss on high their sanguined crests ;*
The hind-part coils along the deep,
And undulates with sinuous sweep.”

The two unhappy youths are first caught and strangled—then the father. The legend is well known to others besides students of the *Æneid*, from the marble group of the Laocoon ; which, however, does not tell the story in the same way, or in so probable a shape, as the poet does, since it represents the reptiles as embracing all three victims at once in their folds. Then, with glad shouts and songs of youths and maidens, the huge monster was dragged over a breach made purposely in the walls of Troy. Yet not without a voice of warning, disregarded, from Cassandra, daughter of King Priam, who had the gift of prophecy, and whose fate it was, like so many prophets in their own families, to prophesy in vain—nor without difficulties which might in themselves have well been considered presages of evil :—

“ Four times ’twas on the threshold stayed ;
Four times the armour clashed and brayed ;
Yet press we on, with passion blind,
All forethought blotted from our mind,
Till the dread monster we install
Within the temple’s tower-built wall.”

* Nay, the “crests” spoken of seem to have been (as reported of the modern sea-serpent) of actual hair ; since Pindar, as Conington has noted, calls them “manes.”

Inside, the fabric is full of armed Greeks. How many there were in number has been disputed—though possibly, in a legend of this kind, the question of more or fewer is scarcely relevant. It is a question, however, which derives some interest from the fact that it was one of the difficulties which exercised the mind of the first Napoleon during his exile. Studying the siege of Troy as if it were a mere prosaic operation in modern warfare, he was struck by the improbability of the whole stratagem. How “even a single company of the Guard” could be hid in such a machine, and dragged from some distance inside the city walls, the French Emperor was unable to conceive, and regarded the story as an infringement of even a poet’s licence. Napoleon was not much of a Latin scholar, and, so far as the main point of his criticism went, had depended too implicitly upon French translators. Segrais, discussing the question in a note, thought there might be perhaps some two or three hundred. Indeed most of our English translators have gone out of their way to exaggerate the number. But Virgil himself, as has been pertinently remarked by Dr Henry, only makes nine men actually come out of the horse, all of whom he mentions by name. The poet certainly does not say in so many words that these were all, but he, at least, is not answerable for a larger number. Among the nine are the young Neoptolemus, surnamed Pyrrhus—“Red-haired,”—son of the dead Achilles, and now his successor in the recognised championship of the force; Sthenelus, the friend and comrade of Diomed (for whose absence it seems hard

to account); Machaon, the hero-physician, whom one hardly expects to find selected for such a desperate service; Epeus, the contriver of the machine, and Ulysses, without whose aid and presence no such stratagem would seem complete.

At dead of night the traitor Sinon looked out to sea, and saw a light in the offing. It was the fire-signal from Agamemnon's vessel; the Greek fleet had come back under cover of the darkness from its lurking-place at Tenedos. Then he silently undid the fastenings of the horse, and the Greek adventurers, as has been said, emerged from their wooden prison.

In the visions of the night Æneas saw the ghastly spectre of the dead Hector stand before him,—

“All torn by dragging at the car,
And black with gory dust of war.
.
Ah, what a sight was there to view!
How altered from the man we knew,
Our Hector, who from day's long toil
Comes radiant in Achilles' spoil,
Or with that red right hand, which casts
The fires of Troy on Grecian masts!
Blood-clotted hung his beard and hair,
And all those many wounds were there,
Which on his gracious person fell
Around the walls he loved so well.”

Virgil seems to have followed the more horrible tradition, which appears also in some of the Greek dramatists, that Achilles fastened Hector to his chariot while still alive.

The shade of the dead hero had come to warn

Æneas not to throw away his life in a hopeless resistance. Troy must fall: but to Æneas, as the hope of his race, the prince of the house of Priam formally intrusts the national gods of Troy and the sacred fire of Vesta, to be carried into the new land which he shall colonise. It is a formal transfer of the kingdom and the priesthood to the younger branch—the line of Assaracus.

Æneas awoke, as he goes on to tell, to hear the war-cries of the Greeks and the clash of arms within the city. Already the storming-party had attacked and set fire to the house of Deiphobus,—to whom Helen, willing or unwilling, had been made over on the death of Paris; and therefore naturally the first point which Menelaus made for. Æneas himself is summoned by a comrade, Panthus, to come to the rescue. The first despairing words of Panthus have a pathos which has made them well known. No English idiom will express with equal brevity and point the Latin “*Fuimus*,”—“We have been—and are not,” for this is understood.* “*Fuimus Troes*”—Mr Conington’s translation gives the full sense, but at the expense of its terseness:—

“We have been Trojans—Troy has been—
She sat, but sits no more, a queen.”

It was a phrase peculiarly Roman. So they used the word “*Vixi*”—“I have lived”—in epitaphs, to express death; though in this, as in so many cases, the

* The French word “*feu*,” used of a person deceased, is probably from this Latin use of “*fui*.”

turn of the expression is due to that euphemism which refrained from using any words of direct ill omen.

“The father of the gods,” says Panthus, “has transferred all our glory to Argos.” There was a story (alluded to in one of the lost tragedies of Sophocles, of which we have but a fragment) that on the night of the capture of Troy the tutelary deities departed in a body, taking their images with them. It is a singular parallel to the well-known tradition, that before the fall of Jerusalem supernatural voices were heard in the night exclaiming, “Let us depart hence!” The Romans had a regular formula for the evocation of the gods from an enemy’s city, and inviting them, with promises of all due honours and sacrifices, to transfer their seat to Rome; and to attack any city without these solemn preliminaries was held to bring a curse on the besiegers.*

Æneas is anxious to assure his fair listener that, in spite of Hector’s adjuration to fly, he did all that man might do in defence of his king and his countrymen. He had rallied a band of brave men, and for a while made head against the enemy. They were favoured by the mistake made by a party of Greeks, who took them for friends in the darkness, and whom they cut to pieces, and having arrayed themselves in their armour, dealt destruction in the enemy’s very ranks. But all resistance was in vain. The appearance of Neoptolemus—Pyrrhus—the “Red-haired”—and the comparison of the young warrior in his strength and beauty to

* For this reason, says Macrobius, the real name of Rome and of its guardian deity was always kept a secret.

the serpent who comes forth after casting its winter slough, is fine in the original, and finely translated:—

“Full in the gate see Pyrrhus blaze,
A meteor, shooting steely rays:
So flames a serpent into light,
On poisonous herbage fed,
Which late in subterranean night
Through winter lay as dead:
Now from its ancient wounds undressed,
Invigorate and young,
Sunward it rears its glittering breast,
And darts its three-forked tongue.”

And the fate of the unhappy Priam is an equally beautiful picture, of a different tone:—

“Perhaps you ask of Priam’s fate:
He, when he sees his town o’erthrown,
Greeks bursting through his palace-gate,
And thronging chambers once his own,
His ancient armour, long laid by,
Around his palsied shoulders throws,
Girds with a useless sword his thigh,
And totters forth to meet his foes.”

Hecuba, who with her women is clinging to the altar, rebukes her husband for this mad attempt to match his feeble strength against the enemy. Still, when Pyrrhus rushes into the hall in pursuit of one of Priam’s sons, Polites, and slays him full in the father’s sight, the old man hurls a javelin at the Greek chief, with a taunting curse upon his cruelty. But it is

“A feeble dart, no blood that drew;
The ringing metal turned it back,
And left it clinging, weak and slack.”

And the ruthless son of Achilles drags the old king to the altar, and slays him there.

One more episode of that terrible night Æneas relates to his hostess :—

“ I stood alone, when lo ! I mark,
In Vesta’s temple crouching dark,
The traitress Helen : the broad blaze
Gives me full light, as round I gaze.
She, shrinking from the Trojans’ hate,
Made frantic by their city’s fate,
Nor dreading less the Danaan sword,
The vengeance of her injured lord,—
She, Troy’s and Argos’ common fiend,
Sat cowering, by the altar screened.
My blood was fired : fierce passion woke
To quit Troy’s fall by one sure stroke.”

But his goddess-mother, Venus, stays his hand, and bids him think rather of saving his wife, and aged father, and infant son. Virgil gives us no hint of the other story of Helen’s discovery by her angry husband Menelaus, who was lifting his sword to kill the adulteress, when his arm fell powerless before the fascination of her beauty.

Obedient to the goddess, says Æneas, he went to seek his father Anchises, that he might carry him with him in his flight. But the old man refused to move. He would die, he said, in Troy. Life might be dear to the young ; but for himself, even the tender mercies of the enemy would give him all he seeks, though they leave his corpse unburied,—

“ He lacks not much that lacks a grave.”

The desperate entreaties of his son were all in vain, until there came an omen from heaven. While Æneas was threatening—since the old man would not be saved—to rush himself again into the fight and meet a warrior's death, his wife Creusa placed their young son Iulus in his arms. Lo! on the child's head there played a lambent light of flame. The mother and Æneas would have sought to extinguish it, but Anchises recognised in it a sign from heaven. Virgil reads us no special interpretation, but surely he meant his Roman readers to understand that the seal of sovereignty was thus early set upon the founder of the great house of Julius. Thunder on the left hand—always the best of auguries—and a meteor flashing across the sky and pointing out their path to the fugitives, confirm the omen.

So the old man was lifted on his son's shoulders, Iulus walking by his side, and Creusa following at some distance. They were to meet outside the city, at the temple of Ceres. Anchises bore in his hands the little images of the household gods (like Laban's teraphim) and the sacred fire; for Æneas himself, red-handed from the battle, might not touch them. But soon the steps of their enemies were heard in pursuit; and Æneas, making his way with his precious burden through by-paths to the place of rendezvous, reached it only to find that though many other fugitives, men, women, and children, had assembled there, the unhappy Creusa had not followed him. Cursing men and gods alike in his agony, he retraced his steps towards Troy, and even penetrated unharmed into the

wreck of Priam's palace, crying aloud his wife's name. Suddenly her shade appeared to him, and bade him not continue so vain a search, or grieve for a loss which was but the fulfilment of the counsels of heaven. She is content to know the future glories which are in store for her husband, and thankful that her own fate has been death (we are left to suppose, at the hands of the Greeks) rather than captivity and slavery. Æneas listened, and at once, obedient to the recognised voice of the gods, whether for good or evil, as is his character throughout, yielded to his fate, and hid himself with his little band of fugitives in the forests of Mount Ida. There they had spent the winter months in building themselves a little fleet of galleys out of the abundant pine-wood; and with the early summer launched upon the seas, wholly in ignorance of their destination, but awaiting confidently the guidance of heaven towards their promised resting-place.

CHAPTER III.

ÆNEAS CONTINUES HIS NARRATIVE.

So, with his father and his infant son, and carrying with him the national gods and sacred fire of Troy, Æneas and the remnant of the Trojans had set forth upon their voyage for the unknown shores of Hesperia--the "Land of the West." Their first resting-place was on the friendly coast of Thrace, where Æneas laid the foundations of a city which was to bear his name. A strange adventure befell him there. While he was pulling some cornel-twigs which grew out of a mound, he found, to his horror, that the ends dropped blood. A third time, after prayer to avert the omen, he plucked a sapling, when a hollow voice from below warned him to desist from such cruelty. It is the grave of the unhappy Polydorus, a young son of Priam, whom his father, when Troy became hard pressed, had sent away with some of his treasures to the safe keeping of the king of Thrace, who for the sake of these treasures had basely murdered him. The cornel-wood spears with which he had been transfixed had taken root, and the blood had flowed

from his body.* They did but wait to pay due honours to the shade of Polydorus, and then hastened from the accursed coast. Landing next on the sacred isle of Delos, they consulted the oracle there as to their future home. Apollo was as enigmatical as his wont—he bade them “seek out their ancient mother.” They understood this to be spoken of the ancient cradle of their race; Anchises thought the phrase pointed to Crete, the birthplace of their ancestral hero Teucus, and where stood the ancient Mount Ida, from which the mountain in the Troad derived its name. And Idomeneus, the king of Crete, who had joined the war against Troy, had been driven from his kingdom, and left a vacant throne.† To Crete they sailed, and there began to build a city, to be called Pergamia, after the citadel of Troy. But a year of deadly pestilence fell on man and beast; and in a dream Æneas saw the angry gods of Troy standing by him “in the full moonlight that streamed through the windows,” and warning him that the promised land, the ancient home of their race, is not in Crete, but Hesperia—the “Land of the West”—whence came their forefather Dardanus. Then Anchises too re-

* Horrible as the legend is, Spenser thought it worth adopting. The Red-Cross Knight, to make a garland for Fidessa, tears branches from the tree that had once been Fradubio.—‘Faery Queen,’ I. ii. 30.

† The story of Idomeneus, according to the old annotators upon Virgil, has a curious similarity to that of Jephthah. He had vowed that if he escaped from a storm at sea, he would offer in sacrifice the first thing that met him on landing. It was his son. A plague followed, and his subjects expelled him.

remembered that such had been the frequent warning of Cassandra—the prophetess to whom none would listen. They re-embarked accordingly. After a storm of three days and three nights, when no pilot could keep the course, they were cast upon the islands of the Harpies*—the monster sisters, half women and half birds, foul and loathsome, who are hateful to gods and men. With them they had to do battle for the meal which they had spread; and one of those hags, in her wrath, prophesied that before they reached their promised Hesperia they should be forced “to eat their tables.”

The description of the ensuing voyage, in Mr Conington’s tasteful translation, reads like a passage from the ‘Lord of the Isles,’ yet presents a fair equivalent, especially in the last fine touch, to the Latin original:—

“The south wind freshens in the sail;
 We hurry o’er the tide,
 Where’er the helmsman and the gale
 Conspire our course to guide;
 Now rises o’er the foamy flood
 Zacynthos, with its crown of wood,

* There is a fine description of these hags in Morris’s ‘Jason,’ where the voyagers

“Beheld the daughters of the Earth and Sea,
 The dreadful Snatchers, who like women were
 Down to the breast, with scanty close black hair
 About their heads, and dim eyes ringed with red,
 And bestial mouths set round with lips of lead.
 But from their gnarled necks there ’gan to spring
 Half hair, half feathers, and a sweeping wing
 Grew out instead of arm on either side,
 And thick plumes underneath the breast did hide
 The place where joined the fearful natures twain.

Dulichium, Samè, Neritos,
Whose rocky sides the waves emboss ;
The crags of Ithaca we flee,
Laertes' rugged sovereignty ;
Nor in our flight forget to curse
The land that was Ulysses' nurse."

They landed on the coast of *Leucadia*, at *Actium*—the scene, be it remembered, of Augustus's great naval victory over Antony and Cleopatra. Here, the Trojan chief takes care to say, he refreshed his weary crew with rest, and celebrated national games. Nay, he hung up there, fugitive as he was, a trophy of defiance—a shield which he had taken from a Greek hero, and inscribed upon it, "The spoil of *Æneas* from the conquering Argives." So speaks the poet ; his Roman audience would recognise the *Actian* games, celebrated there every fifth year by order of Augustus in honour of his great victory ; and *Æneas*'s trophy is not so out of place as it might seem.

At *Buthrotus*, in *Epirus*, the wanderers had met with old friends. *Andromache* is settled there, now the wife of *Helenus*, who, by a strange vicissitude, has become the successor of *Neoptolemus* in his Greek province. There is little of what we call sentiment in these "heroic" times, especially as concerns "woman and her master." It grates upon the feelings of the reader who has in mind the pathetic scene between *Hector* and his wife in the *Iliad* of *Homer*, to be told here by the poet—told, too, as an ordinary incident, as in fact it was—that *Andromache* had become the property of the conqueror *Neoptolemus*, and that he,

bent upon a marriage with Hermione, daughter of Helen and Menelaus, had handed over his Trojan wife—"Hector's Andromache," as she still pathetically calls herself—to her fellow-captive Helenus, Hector's brother. She tells her own sad story, not without some sense of its wretchedness—

"Ay—I am living; living still
Through all extremity of ill."

And she envies the fate of Polyxena, her sister-in-law, slain on the tomb of Achilles. Still, she has accepted her lot—the lot of so many women in her day. And Helenus, her present lord, is (if that be any consolation) a sort of king; for Orestes has killed Neoptolemus, and Helenus has in some way succeeded him, and built a new "Pergamus" in Greece. So that here, too, the poet would tell us, Troy has conquered her conquerors—a son of Priam reigns in the territory of Achilles. But the impression made upon an English mind as to Andromache's fate is, after all, that of degradation, and we gladly turn from the page which relates it.

Helenus, like his sister Cassandra, has the gift of prophecy; he had been the great authority on all such matters to his countrymen during the siege. He now read the omens for Æneas, at his request; all were favourable. The wanderers should reach the promised Hesperia; but that western land was further off than they thought, and their voyage would prove long and weary. When they reached it, they should find under

a holm-oak a white sow with a litter of thirty young ones: there the new town was to be built—the “Alba Longa” which has already been forenamed in Jupiter’s promise to Venus. Helenus dismissed them with good wishes and ample presents; Andromache making special gifts to the boy Ascanius, whose age and features remind the mother of her own lost Astyanax. Æneas’ words of farewell are these:—

“Live, and be blest! ’tis sweet to feel
Fate’s book is closed and under seal.
For us, alas! that volume stern
Has many another page to turn.
Yours is a rest assured: no more
Of ocean wave to task the oar;
No far Ausonia to pursue,
Still flying, flying from the view.”

They set sail from this friendly shore, and on the following day caught their first sight of the shores of Italy. But though they landed and offered sacrifice to Juno, as Helerus had bid them do, they knew that this was not the spot on which they were to settle, and soon put to sea again. They passed the bay of Tarentum, escaping the dangers of Charybdis, and landed under Ætna, on the shore where dwell the Cyclops—the one-eyed race of giants, who, according to one legend, labour in their underground forges for Vulcan, the divine smith. Here the poet introduces us to a direct reminiscence of the wanderings of Ulysses. He adopts the whole of Homer’s story—the visit of the Greek chief and his comrades to the cave of the giant Polyphemus, his

cannibal meal, and the vengeance which Ulysses took upon him by burning out his eye.* Æneas relates how he met there with one of Ulysses' crew, who by some mischance had been left behind, and who had hid himself three months (so close is the date of the two voyages) from the clutches of Polyphemus and his fellow-Cyclops. They took the wretched fugitive on board, and put to sea again just in time to escape the blind monster, who waded into the sea after them at the sound of the oars. They skirted the coast of Sicily, and at Drepanum the chief had buried his father Anchises. It was on casting off from Sicily that he had been driven by the storm on this unknown coast of Libya, on the spot soon to be famous enough as the site of Carthage.

“So king Æneas told his tale,
While all beside were still—
Rehearsed the fortunes of his sail,
And Fate's mysterious will :
Then to its close his legend brought,
And gladly took the rest he sought.”

* See Homer's *Odyssey*, p. 69.

CHAPTER IV.

DIDO.

THE Carthaginian queen has been an eager listener to Æneas's story. She is love-stricken—suddenly, and irremediably. The poet has thought it necessary to explain the fact by the introduction of the god of love himself, whom, in the shape of the young Ascanius, she has been nursing on her bosom. The passion itself is looked upon by the poet—and as we must suppose by his audience—as such a palpable weakness, that even in a woman (and it is to women almost exclusively, in ancient classical fiction, that these sudden affections are attributed) it was thought necessary to account for it by the intervention of some more than human influence. Either human nature has developed, or our modern poets understand its workings better. Shakespeare makes the angry Brabantio accuse the Moor of having stolen his daughter's love

“By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks ;”

but Othello himself has a far simpler and more natural explanation of the matter—

“She loved me for the dangers I had passed ;—
This only is the witchcraft I have used.”

So it has been with Dido. But she is terribly ashamed of her own feelings. She finds relief in disclosing them to a very natural confidant—her sister Anna. She confesses her weakness, but avows at the same time a determination not to yield to it. The stranger has interested her deeply, after a fashion which has not touched her since the death of her husband Sichæus.

“Were not my purpose fixed as fate
With none in wedlock’s band to mate,—
Were bed and bridal aught but pain,—
Perchance I had been weak again.”

But her sister—suiting her counsels, as all confidants are apt to do, to the secret wishes rather than to the professions of Dido—encourages the passion. Perpetual widowhood has a romantic sound, but is not, in Anna’s opinion, a desirable estate. Besides, in this newly-planted colony, surrounded as they are by fierce African tribes, an alliance with these Trojan strangers will be a tower of strength. The stout arm of such a husband as Æneas is much needed by a widowed queen. His visit—so Anna thinks—is nothing less than providential—

“’Twas Heaven and Juno’s grace that bore,
I ween, these Trojans to our shore.”

By all means let them detain their illustrious visitor with them as long as possible—his ships require 10

fitting and his crews refreshment—and the result will not be doubtful.

The advice suits with the queen's new mood too well to be rejected. Together the sisters offer pious sacrifices to the gods—to Juno especially, as the goddess of marriage—to give their sanction to the hoped-for alliance. The restless feelings of the enamoured woman are described in one of the finest and most admired passages of the poem :—

“E'en as a deer whom from afar
A swain, in desultory war,
Where Cretan woods are thick,
Has pierced, as 'mid the trees she lies,
And, all unknowing of his prize,
Has left the dart to stick :
She wanders lawn and forest o'er,
While the fell shaft still drinks her gore.*
Now through the city of her pride
She walks, Æneas at her side,
Displays the stores of Sidon's trade,
And stately homes already made :
Begins, but stops she knows not why,
And lets the imperfect utterance die.
Now, as the sunlight wears away,
She seeks the feast of yesterday,
Inquires once more of Troy's eclipse,
And hangs once more upon his lips ;
Then, when the guests have gone their ways,
And the dim moon withdraws her rays,

* “To the which place a poor sequestered stag,
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,
Had come to languish.”

—SHAKESPEARE, ‘As you Like it,’ *il. l.*

And setting stars to slumber call,
Alone she mourns in that lone hall,
Clasps the dear couch where late he lay,
Beholds him, hears him far away ;
Or keeps Ascanius on her knees,
And in the son the father sees,
Might she but steal one peaceful hour
From love's ungovernable power.
No more the growing towers arise,
No more in martial exercise
The youth engage, make strong the fort,
Or shape the basin to a port."

The powers of Olympus here come again upon the scene. Juno sees, not without a secret satisfaction, the prospect of an entanglement between Æneas and Dido, which may detain these hated Trojans in Africa, and so prevent their settlement and dominion in Italy. So Carthage, and not the Rome of the future, may yet be the mistress of the world. She addresses herself at once to the goddess of love—not without a sneer at the success of her snares in poor Dido's case; a sorry triumph it is indeed—two divinities pitted against a weak woman! But come—suppose in this matter they agree to act in concert; let there be a union between the two nations, and let Carthage be the seat of their joint power; its citizens shall pay equal honours to the queen of heaven and the queen of love. Venus understands perfectly well that Juno's motive is at any cost to prevent the foundation of Rome; but, having a clearer vision (we must presume) than her great rival of the probable results, she agrees to the terms. There is to be a hunting-party on the morrow,

and Juno will take care that opportunity shall be given for the furtherance of Dido's passion. The royal hunt is again a striking picture, almost mediæval in its rich colouring :—

“ The morn meantime from ocean rose :
 Forth from the gates with daybreak goes
 The silvan regiment :
 Thin nets are there, and spears of steel,
 And there Massylian riders wheel,
 And dogs of keenest scent.
 Before the chamber of her state
 Long time the Punic nobles wait
 The appearing of the queen :
 With gold and purple housings fit
 Stands her proud steed, and champs the bit
 His foaming jaws between.
 At length with long attendant train
 She comes : her scarf of Tyrian grain,*
 With broidered border decked :
 Of gold her quiver : knots of gold
 Confine her hair : her vesture's fold
 By golden clasp is checked.
 The Trojans and Iulus gay
 In glad procession take their way.
 Æneas, comeliest of the throng,
 Joins their proud ranks, and steps along,
 As when from Lycia's wintry airs
 To Delos' isle Apollo fares ;
 The Agathyrsian, Dryop, Crete,
 In dances round his altar meet :
 He on the heights of Cynthus moves,
 And binds his hair's loose flow

* This was the dye procured from the shell-fish called murex—especially costly, because each fish contained but a single drop of the precious tincture.

With cincture of the leaf he loves :
 Behind him sounds his bow ;—
So firm Æneas' graceful tread,
So bright the glories round his head.

But young Ascanius on his steed
 With boyish ardour glows,
And now in ecstasy of speed
 He passes these, now those :
For him too peaceful and too tame
The pleasure of the hunted game :
He longs to see the foaming boar,
Or hear the tawny lion's roar.

Meantime, loud thunder-peals resound,
And hail and rain the sky confound :
And Tyrian chiefs and sons of Troy,
And Venus' care, the princely boy,
Seek each his shelter, winged with dread,
While torrents from the hills run red.
Driven haply to the same retreat,
The Dardan chief and Dido meet.
Then Earth, the venerable dame,
 And Juno, give the sign :
Heaven lightens with attesting flame,
 And bids its torches shine,
And from the summit of the peak
The nymphs shrill out the nuptial shriek.

That day she first began to die ;
That day first taught her to defy
The public tongue, the public eye.
No secret love is Dido's aim :
She calls it marriage now ; such name
She chooses to conceal her shame."

A rejected suitor of the Carthaginian queen,—Iarbas, king of Gætulia,—hears the news amongst the rest. He is a reputed son of Jupiter; and now, furious at seeing this wanderer from Troy—"this second Paris," as he calls him—preferred to himself, he appeals for vengeance to his Olympian parent. The appeal is heard, and Mercury is despatched to remind Æneas of his high destinies, which he is forgetting in this dalliance at Carthage. If he has lost all ambition for himself, let him at least remember the rights of his son Ascanius, which he is thus sacrificing to the indulgence of his own wayward passions. The immortal messenger finds the Trojan chief busied in planning the extension of the walls and streets of the new city which he has already adopted as his home. He delivers his message briefly and emphatically, and vanishes. Thus recalled to a full sense of his false position, Æneas is at first horror-struck and confounded. How to disobey the direct commands of Heaven, and run counter to the oracles of fate; how, on the other hand, to break his faith with Dido, and ungratefully betray the too confiding love of his hostess and benefactress; how even to venture to hint to her a word of parting, and how to escape the probable vengeance of the Carthaginian people;—all these considerations crowd into his mind, and perplex him terribly. On the main point, however, his resolution is soon taken. He will obey the mandate of the gods, at any cost. He summons the most trusted of his comrades, and bids them make secret preparations to set sail once more in quest of their home in Italy. He promises himself that he will

to be made

either find or make some opportunity of breaking the news of his departure to Dido.

* This is the turning-point of the poem ; and here it is that the interest to a modern reader, so far as the mere plot of the story is concerned, is sadly marred by the way in which the hero thus cuts himself off from all our sympathies. His most ingenious apologists—and he has found many—appeal to us in vain. Upon the audience or the readers of his own time, no doubt, the effect might have been different. To the critics of Augustus's court, love—or what they understood by it—was a mere weakness in the hero. The call which Heaven had conveyed to him was to found the great empire of the future ; and because he obeys the call at the expense of his tenderest feelings, the poet gives him always his distinctive epithet—the “pious” Æneas. The word “pious,” it must be remembered, implies in the Latin the recognition of all duties to one's country and one's parents, as well as to the gods. And in all these senses Æneas would deserve it. But to an English mind, the “piety” which pleads the will of Heaven as an excuse for treachery to a woman, only adds a deeper hue of infamy to the transaction. It

J “Doth make the fault the worse by the excuse.”

But our story must not wait for us to discuss too curiously the morals of the hero. Æneas has thought to make his preparations without the knowledge of the queen—while she

“Still dreams her happy dream, nor thinks
That ought can break those golden links.”

But, as the poet goes on to say, “Who can cheat the eyes of love?” Dido soon learns his change of purpose, and taxes him openly with his baseness and ingratitude. The whole of this fourth book of the *Æneid*—“The Passion of Dido,” as it has been called—is of a very high order of tragic pathos. The queen is by turns furious and pathetic; now she hurls menaces and curses against her false lover, now she condescends to pitiable entreaty. The Trojan chief’s defence, such as it is, is that he had never meant to stay. He is bound, the pilgrim of Heaven, for *Latium*. His father Anchises is warning him continually in the visions of the night not to linger here: and now the messenger of the gods in person has come to chide this fond delay.

The grand storm of wrath in which the injured queen bursts upon him in reply has severely taxed the powers of all Virgil’s English translators. They seem to have felt themselves no more of a match for “the fury of a woman scorned” than *Æneas* was. Certainly they all fail, more or less, to give the fire and bitterness of the original. The heroics of Dryden suit it better, perhaps, than any other measure:—

“False as thou art, and more than false, forsworn!
 Not sprung from noble blood, nor goddess-born,
 But hewn from hardened entrails of a rock,
 And rough Hyrcanian tigers gave thee suck!
 Why should I fawn? what have I worse to fear?
 Did he once look, or lend a listening ear,
 Sigh when I sobbed, or shed one kindly tear?
 All symptoms of a base ungrateful mind—
 So foul, that, which is worse, ’tis hard to find.

Of man's injustice why should I complain?
The gods, and Jove himself, behold in vain
Triumphant treason, yet no thunder flies;
Nor Juno views my wrongs with equal eyes:
Faithless is earth, and faithless are the skies!
Justice is fled, and truth is now no more.
I saved the shipwrecked exile on my shore:
With needful food his hungry Trojans fed:
I took the traitor to my throne and bed:
Fool that I was!—'tis little to repeat
The rest—I stored and rigged his ruined fleet.
I rave, I rave! A god's command he pleads!
And makes heaven accessory to his deeds.
Now Lycian lots; and now the Delian god;
Now Hermes is employed from Jove's abode,
To warn him hence; as if the peaceful state
Of heavenly powers were touched with human fate!
But go: thy flight no longer I detain—
Go seek thy promised kingdom through the main!
Yet, if the heavens will hear my pious vow,
The faithless waves, not half so false as thou,
Or secret sands, shall sepulchres afford
To thy proud vessels and their perjured lord.
Then shalt thou call on injured Dido's name:
Dido shall come, in a black sulph'ry flame,
When death has once dissolved her mortal frame,
Shall smile to see the traitor vainly weep;
Her angry ghost, arising from the deep,
Shall haunt thee waking, and disturb thy sleep.
At least my shade thy punishment shall know;
And fame shall spread the pleasing news below."

But in this passage, if nowhere else, a French translator has surpassed all his English rivals. Possibly the fervid passion of the scene, worked up as it

is almost to exaggeration, is more akin to the genius of the French language.*

* Delille's fine translation of this passage is so little known to English readers that it may well find room in a note :—

“ Non—tu n'es point le fils de la mère d'Amour ;
 Au sang de Dardanus tu ne dois point le jour ;
 N'impute point aux dieux la naissance d'un traître—
 Non, du sang d'héros un monstre n'a pu naître ;
 Non.—Le Caucase affreux, t'engendrant en fureur,
 De ses plus durs rochers fit ton barbare cœur,
 Et du tigre inhumain la compagne sauvage,
 Cruel ! avec son lait t'a fait sucer sa rage.
 Car enfin qui m'arrête ? Après ses durs refus,
 Après tant de mépris, qu'attendrais-je de plus ?
 S'est-il laissé fléchir à mes cris douloureux ?
 A-t-il au moins daigné tourner vers moi les yeux ?
 Prosternée à ses pieds, plaintive, suppliante,
 N'a-t-il pas d'un front calme écouté son amante ?

Sans secours, sans asile, errant de mers en mers,
 Par les flots en courroux jeté dans nos deserts,
 Je l'ai reçu, l'ingrat ! des fureurs de l'orage
 J'ai sauvé ses sujets, ses vaisseaux de naufrage,
 Je lui donne mon cœur, mon empire, ma main :
 O fureur, et voilà que ce monstre inhumain
 Ose imputer aux dieux son horrible parjure,
 Me parle et d'Apollon, et d'oracle, et d'augure !
 Pour presser son départ, l'ambassadeur des dieux
 Est descendu vers lui de la voûte des cieux :
 Dignes soins, en effet, de ces maîtres du monde !
 En effet, sa grandeur trouble leur paix profonde !
 —C'en est assez ; va, pars ; je ne te retiens pas ;
 Va chercher loin de moi je ne sais quels états :
 S'il est encore un dieu redoutable aux ingrats,
 J'espère que bientôt, pour prix d'un si grand crime,
 Brisé contre un écueil, plongé dans un abîme,
 Tu païras mes malheurs, perfide ! et de Didon
 Ta voix, ta voix plaintive invoquera le mon.”

We cannot, however, do better than return to Mr Conington's version for the sequel:—

“ Her speech half done, she breaks away,
And sickening shuns the light of day,
And tears her from his gaze ;
While he, with thousand things to say,
Still falters and delays :
Her servants lift the sinking fair,
And to her marble chamber bear.”

The Trojans prepare to depart ; but the enamoured queen makes one more despairing effort to detain her faithless guest. She sends her sister to ask at least for some short space of delay—until she shall have schooled herself to bear his loss. Æneas is obdurate in his “ piety.” Then her last resolve is taken. She cheats her sister into the belief that she has found some spells potent enough to restrain the truant lover. Part of the charm is that his armour, and all that had belonged to him while in her company, must be consumed by fire. So a lofty pile is built in the palace-court ; but it is to be the funeral pile of Dido. As she looks forth from the turret of her palace at day-break, she sees the ships of Æneas already far in the offing ; for, warned again by Mercury that there will be risk of his departure being prevented by force if he delays, he has already set sail under cover of the night. For a moment the queen thinks of ordering her seamen to give chase ; but it is a mere passing phase of her despair. She contents herself with imprecating an eternal enmity between his race and hers—fulfilled, as

the poet means us to bear in mind, in the long and bloody wars between Rome and Carthage.

“And, Tyrians, you through time to come
His seed with deathless hatred chase:
Be that your gift to Dido's tomb:
No love, no league 'twixt race and race.
Rise from my ashes, scourge of crime,
Born to pursue the Dardan horde
To-day, to-morrow, through all time,
Oft as our hands can wield the sword:
Fight shore with shore, fight sea with sea,
Fight all that are, or e'er shall be!”

With a master's hand the poet enhances the glories of his country by this prophetic introduction of the terrible Hannibal. The peaceful empire of Cæsar, before whom East and West bow, is thrown into the broadest light by reference to those early days when Rome lay almost at the mercy of her implacable enemy

“Then, maddening over crime, the queen
With bloodshot eyes, and sanguine streaks
Fresh painted on her quivering cheeks,
And wanning o'er with death foreseen,
Through inner portals wildly fares,
Scales the high pile with swift ascent,
Takes up the Dardan sword and bares—
Sad gift, for different uses meant.
She eyed the robes with wistful look,
And pausing, thought awhile and wept:
Then pressed her to the couch and spoke
Her last good-night or ere she slept.
‘Sweet relics of a time of love,
When fate and heaven were kind,

Receive my life-blood, and remove
These torments of the mind.
My life is lived, and I have played
The part that Fortune gave,
And now I pass, a queenly shade,
Majestic to the grave.
A glorious city I have built,
Have seen my walls ascend ;
Chastised for blood of husband spilt,
A brother, yet no friend :
Blest lot ! yet lacked one blessing more,
That Troy had never touched my shore !' ”

So she mounts the funeral pile, and stabs herself
with the Trojan's sword, her sister Anna coming upon
the scene only in time to receive the parting breath.

CHAPTER V.

THE FUNERAL GAMES.

FAR off at sea, Æneas and his crew see the flames go up from Dido's palace.

“What cause has lit so fierce a flame
They know not ; but the pangs of shame
From great love wronged, and what despair
Will make a baffled woman dare,—
All this they know ; and knowing tread
The paths of presage vague and dread.”

Not yet is their course clear for Italy. A storm comes on, and they make for refuge towards the friendly coast of Sicily, and run their vessels into a sheltered bay under Mount Eryx. Their return is gladly welcomed by their late host, Acestes, who receives the wanderers, as before, with princely hospitality, still mindful of his own Trojan blood. It chanced that the morrow is the anniversary of the burial of Anchises ; and Æneas, summoning an open-air council of his crews, announces to them his intention of commemorating his father by a solemn public

sacrifice. It is a day which—wherever his lot may be hereafter cast—he will ever keep holy; and not without some providential guidance, as he deems, has this opportunity been afforded him, by his being driven back to Sicily, of celebrating it on friendly soil under the auspices of his kinsman. There shall be nine days of sacrifice and prayer; then shall follow funeral games, with prizes at his own cost.

The sacrificial oxen are duly slain, and the libations poured at the tomb of Anchises; the bowls of new milk, of wine, and of blood, and the fresh spring flowers, which were reckoned acceptable offerings to the dead. Then Æneas lifts his voice in prayer to the shade of the hero, and a startling omen follows the invocation. A serpent, dappled with green and gold, glides out of the tomb, tastes of the offerings, and disappears again. Æneas sees in the creature the tutelary genius of the spot, or, it may be, the special attendant of his father's shade. In either case, he accepts its appearance as a good omen, and joyfully redoubles his devotions.

In the funeral games which follow, the Roman poet no doubt had two models in his mind. He was ambitious to reproduce, or perhaps to rival, in Roman song, for an audience of his countrymen, the grand description which his great master Homer had given of the games which Achilles celebrates in honour of the dead Patroclus. He wished also, there can be little doubt, to pay a poet's best compliment to his imperial patron, ✓ and to weave into his song, with such licence of embellishment as is allowed to all poets, a record of those

funeral games which Augustus had instituted in remembrance of his uncle, the great Dictator Julius. But Virgil is here very far from being a mere copyist from Homer. In lieu of the chariot-race, the great feature in the games of the Iliad, he has given us a galley-race, the incidents of which are quite as exciting, and to our modern comprehensions more thoroughly intelligible.

The day fixed for the great spectacle has arrived, and the Sicilians from far and near flock to it, some to take part in the games, and all to see. First of the various contests comes the galley-race, for which four of the fastest vessels in the fleet have entered—the Shark, the Centaur, the Chimæra, and the Scylla; each displaying, no doubt, as its figure-head, a representation of the monster whose name it bore. Their captains were men well known. Humouring a genealogical fancy of his Roman countrymen for tracing their descent to some one of the old Trojan colonists,—much after the fashion of English houses who try to find an ancestor on the Roll of Battle Abbey,—the poet tells us that three at least out of the four gave their names in due time to patrician houses in Rome. Mnestheus, who commands the Shark, left his name (certainly with considerable modification) to the *gens* or clan of Memmius. The captain of the Centaur, Sergestus, is in like manner the reputed ancestor of the Sergian clan, as Cloanthus, who sails the Scylla, is of the Cluentian. Only Gyas, the captain of the Chimæra, a bulky craft, “as big as a town,” has no such genealogical honours assigned him.

The course lies out in the bay, and the competing vessels are to round a rock, covered at high tides, on which an oak has been set up, leaves and all, to serve as a mark for the steersmen. They take up their positions by lot, and await the signal, to be given by sound of trumpet. The picture of the start would suit, with wonderfully little alteration, the description of a modern University boat-race :—

“ And now on rowing-bench they sit,
 Bend to the oar their arms close knit,
 And straining watch the sign to start,
 While generous trembling fills each heart,
 And thirst for victory.

Then, at the trumpet’s piercing sound,
 All from their stations onward bound :
 Upscars to heaven the oarsmen’s shout,
 The upturned billows froth and spout.

With plaudits loud and clamorous zeal
 Echoes the woodland round ;
 The pent shores roll the thunder-peal,
 The stricken hills resound.”

[Our modern oarsmen would certainly be wiser in this, that they would reserve their own breath (of which they would find considerable need towards the end of the race), and leave the whole of the shouting to be done by enthusiastic spectators.]

“ First Gyas issues from the rout,
 And holds the foremost place :
 Cloanthus next ; his oarsmen row
 More featly, but his bark is slow,
 And checks him in the race.

Behind at equal distance strain
Centaur and Shark the lead to gain ;
And now the Shark darts forth, and now
The Centaur has advanced her bow ;
And now the twain move side by side,
Their long keels trailing through the tide."

So goes the race, until the galleys near the rock which they have to round. Gyas sees that his steersman, from over caution, is giving it too wide a berth, and that there is danger of the Scylla, more venturous, cutting in between. He shouts an order to keep closer in ; but the old seaman is somewhat obstinate, and it is very soon too late. Cloanthus has seen his advantage, shot round the rock at very close quarters, and now leaves Gyas in the Chimæra behind. Burning with fury, Gyas turns on his steersman, and pitches him into the sea. Happily he can swim, and the rock is close at hand ; he climbs upon it, and sits there dripping, to the considerable amusement of the spectators, who, like all lookers-on, seem unmercifully alive to the ludicrous element in any disaster

Deprived of her helmsman, the huge Chimæra loses her course for a moment, and the two galleys in the rear are quick to take advantage of it. The Shark and Centaur are now rounding the rock almost side by side. But Sergestus, in his eagerness not to lose an inch of advantage, emulates the manœuvre of the Scylla too closely, and takes the Centaur too near. Her broadside of oars touch some of the jutting crags, the oars are broken, and the boat's head takes the rock, and hangs there hard and fast. All efforts of the

crew to get her off are unavailing. Mnestheus makes the dangerous turn safely on the outside of his rival, and his men, encouraged by success, redouble their efforts. The Chimæra has no good steersman to replace old Menœtes, who is still drying himself on the rock, and she is easily passed on the return course homewards. The struggle becomes now one of intense interest between Mnestheus and Cloanthus, who is still leading in the Scylla.

“The cheers redouble from the shore;
Heaven echoes with the wild uproar;
Those blush to lose a conquering game,
And fain would peril life for fame;
These bring success their zeal to fan—
They can, because they think they can.”

The Shark has a stern chase, but the Scylla rows heavily, as we have been told, though she has the best crew, and the distance lessens at every stroke. Had the course been longer, the Shark would have made at least a dead heat of it. But as it is, amidst a storm of shouts, the Scylla wins. The turning-point of victory is one which does not approve itself to modern readers. The sea-deities interfere. Standing high upon his quarter-deck, Cloanthus lifts his prayer to the powers of ocean, not to permit his prize to be snatched from him at the last. He vows an offering of a milk-white bull and libations of red wine if they will help him at his need.

“He said; there heard him 'neath the sea
The Nereid train and Panope;

And with his hand divinely strong,
Portunus * pushed the bark along."

Possibly, after all, the poet only means us to understand that this was Mnestheus's explanation of his defeat—that the luck was against him.†

Cloanthus is crowned with bays as the victor of the day, and receives as his prize an embroidered robe of rare device—one of those miracles of divers colours of needlework in which the classical age seems to have as far excelled us as the mediæval ladies certainly did. Each crew receives three oxen and a supply of wine, while a talent of silver is divided amongst the men of the victorious Scylla. Mnestheus, as second in the race, wins a shirt of mail whose scales are of gold, which two of his attendants bear off with difficulty. The third of the captains has a pair of brazen caldrons and chased silver bowls. But while the awards are being distributed, the crippled Centaur has got off the rock, and is brought into harbour; and a Cretan slave-woman, with her twin children, is allotted, by the liberality of Æneas, as a consolation to her captain.

* One of the Roman sea-deities.

† Such explanations of an unfavourable result are not entirely unknown in the annals of modern boat-races. Reasons of a very apocryphal kind, if not so boldly mythological, have been assigned by modern captains of crews for their having been beaten. When an unsuccessful oarsman recounts his deeds to a sympathetic audience, and "tells how fields were" *not* won, he is apt to complain that, in some form or other, the river-gods were unjust. The state of the tide, or an intruding barge, or an imprudent supper on the part of "No. 7," takes the place of Panope and Portunus.

From the shore of the bay the company now move off to a natural amphitheatre close at hand, where the rest of the games are to be exhibited. Æneas takes his place high in the midst on an extemporised throne. For the foot-race, which comes first on the list, a crowd of competitors enter, both of native Sicilians and of their Trojan guests. Among the Sicilians are Salius and Patron, of Greek families settled in the island, and Helymus and Panopes, friends and companions of Acestes. The favourites among the Trojans are Diores, one of the many sons of Priam, and Nisus and Euryalus, noted for their romantic friendship, of which we shall hear more hereafter. The prizes in this contest are a war-horse with full trappings for the first, an Amazonian quiver for the second, and a helmet—the spoil of some conquered Greek on the plain of Troy—for the third. Nisus goes off with a strong lead, and has the race easily in hand. Next him, but at a long interval, comes Salius, Euryalus lying third, Helymus and Diores, close together, fourth and fifth. But when within a short distance of the goal, Nisus slips up in the blood and filth which has been left uncleared at the spot where the oxen have been sacrificed, and falls heavily to the ground. Knowing himself to be out of the race, he determines that his dear Euryalus shall win. So, by a piece of most unjustifiable jockeyship, which ought to have led to his being warned off from all such contests for ever after, he rises up at the moment that Salius is passing, and brings him down upon him. Euryalus has thus an easy victory, Helymus and Diores coming in second

and third. Very naturally, there is much dispute about the award. Salius complains loudly of unfair play ; but young Euryalus is handsome and popular, and Diores backs his claim energetically ; for it is very evident that if Salius is adjudged the first prize, Euryalus the second, and Helymus the third, then he—Diores—will be nowhere. So the result is accepted by the judges as it stands. But Æneas quiets the reasonable objections of Salius by the present of a lion's hide with gilded claws. Then Nisus makes appeal for compensation, pointing out to the laughing spectators the blood and dirt which are the very disagreeable evidences of his mishap, and protesting, with a consummate impudence which suits with the popular humour, that the whole thing was an accident, and that he, as the winner that would have been, is the real object of commiseration. If a fall deserves a prize, who has so good a claim as the man who fell first ? Again the generosity of Æneas answers the appeal, and Nisus is presented with a shield of the finest workmanship, another Greek trophy. Successful knavery, if the knave be somewhat of a humourist withal, always wins a sort of sympathy from the public—in the Augustan epic as well as in modern comedy.

The prizes of the foot-race having been thus decided, the lists are cleared for the boxing-match. The boxing-match of the classical ancients was very different indeed from a modern set-to. The combatants certainly wore gloves ; but these were meant to add weight and force to the blow, not to deaden it. The stoutest

champion of the modern prize-ring might shrink from encountering an antagonist whose fists were bound round with strips of hardened ox-hide. But such was the "cæstus" which was worn by the pugilists of this heroic age. The prizes are displayed by Æneas; for the conqueror, a bull with gilded horns; a helmet and falchion for the loser. Up rises the Trojan Dares, whose strength and skill are well known. The only man whom he acknowledged as his superior in the ring was one whom we might have least expected—Paris, who certainly bears no such reputation in Homer. At the great games held in honour of the dead Hector, of which we have the very briefest note in the Iliad, Dares had defeated the huge champion Butes, sprung from a race of athletes, and so mangled him that he died on the spot. No wonder that when he now steps forth, and goes through some preparatory sparring with the air, no one is found bold enough to put on the gloves with him. So, after a glance of triumph round the admiring circle, he advances to where the bull stands in front of Æneas, lays his hand upon its horns, and claims it as his rightful property in default of an antagonist.

King Acestes is concerned for the honour of Sicily. There is lying beside him on the grass a grey-haired chief named Entellus, sometime a pupil in this art of the great hero Eryx, who gave his name to the mountain which overhangs the place of assembly. Will he sit tamely by, Acestes asks, and see this Trojan boaster carry off the prize and the glory unchallenged? Entellus listens to his friend, and feels the old fire stir

within him. He would willingly enter the ring once more for the honour of his native island,—

“But strength is slack in limbs grown old,
And aged blood runs dull and cold.
Had I the thing I once possessed,
Which makes yon braggart rear his crest,
Had I but youth, no need had been
Of gifts, to lure me to the green.”

He rises from his seat, however, and throws down in the arena, by way of challenge, a pair of ancient gloves of a most murderous pattern. Seven folds of tough bull-hide have knobs of lead and iron sewn inside them. They are the gloves in which the hero Eryx fought his fatal battle with Hercules, whom he had rashly challenged, and they still bear the blood-stains of Eryx's previous victories. Dares, stout champion as he is, starts back in dismay when he sees them, and Æneas himself takes them up and handles them with wonder. Entellus, however, will not insist on using these; and two pair of less formidable manufacture and of equal weight are produced, with which the two heroes engage. Virgil's description of this ancient prize-fight is highly spirited. It may remind some readers, who are old enough to remember such things, of the bulletins of similar encounters between a “light-weight” and a “heavy-weight,” furnished in past days by sporting writers to our own newspapers—with the happy omission of the slang of the ring:—

“Raised on his toes each champion stands,
And fearless lifts in air his hands.

Their heads thrown back avoid the stroke;
Their mighty arms the fight provoke.
That on elastic youth relies,
This on vast limbs and giant size;
But the huge knees with age are slack,
And fitful gasps the deep chest rack.
Full many a blow the heroes rain
Each on the other, still in vain :
Their hollow sides return the sound,
Their battered chests the shock rebound :
'Mid ears and temples come and go
The wandering gauntlets to and fro :
The jarred teeth chatter 'neath the blow.
Firm stands Entellus in his place,
A column rooted on its base ;
His watchful eye and shrinking frame
Alone avoid the gauntlet's aim.
Like leaguer who invests a town,
Or sits before a hill-fort down,
The younger champion tasks his art
To find the bulwark's weakest part ;
This way and that unwearied scans,
And vainly tries a thousand plans.
Entellus, rising to the blow,
Puts forth his hand : the wary foe
Midway in air the mischief spied,
And, deftly shifting, slipped aside.
Entellus' force on air is spent :
Heavily down with prone descent
He falls, as from its roots uprent
A pine falls hollow, on the side
Of Erymanth or lofty Ide.

Acestes rushes in, like an attentive second, to raise his friend; and Entellus, roused to fury by his fall, renews the fight savagely:—

“Ablaze with fury he pursues
 The Trojan o’er the green,
 And now his right hand deals the bruise,
 And now his left as keen.
 No pause, no respite : fierce and fast
 As hailstones rattle down the blast
 On sloping roofs, with blow on blow,
 He buffets Dares to and fro.”

The unhappy Dares is borne off by his friends in miserable plight,—with half his teeth knocked out, blood streaming from his face, and hardly able to stand. All the savage has been roused in Entellus’s nature by the fight. He is not half satisfied that his victim has escaped him. He would gladly have sacrificed him to the memory of his great master Eryx,—here, on the spot where that hero fought his own last fight. He lays his hand upon the bull, the prize of battle, and addresses Æneas and the spectators. Dryden’s version of this passage, though it contains as much of Dryden as of Virgil, has justly been praised as very noble :—

“O goddess-born, and ye Dardanian host,
 Mark with attention, and forgive my boast ;
 Learn what I was by what remains, and know
 From what impending fate you saved my foe !
 Sternly he spoke, and then confronts the bull ;
 And on his ample forehead aiming full,
 The deadly stroke descending pierced the skull.
 Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound,
 But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground.
 ‘Then thus, in Dares’ stead, I offer this :
 Eryx, accept a nobler sacrifice ;
 Take the last gift my withered arms can yield—
 Thy gauntlets I resign, and here renounce the field.’”

Mr Conington has well remarked that here we have, no doubt, "the veteran combatant's feelings as conceived by the veteran poet." He wrote the lines in his sixty-second year, and they harmonise pathetically with the words in his dedication: "What I now offer to your lordship is the wretched remainder of a sickly age." We are not obliged to take this self-depreciation too literally: whatever may be the shortcomings of Dryden's translation, the hand of the old poet had no more lost its vigour than that of Entellus.

The archers are next to try their skill. In this contest Acestes himself takes part. The other competitors are Mnestheus, whose crew were just now second in the race; Eurytion, a brother of Pandarus, the great archer of the *Iliad*, whose treacherous arrow, launched against Menelaus during the truce, had well-nigh turned the fate of Troy; and Hippocoon, of whom we know nothing more. He draws the first lot, and his arrow strikes the mast on which the mark, a live dove, is perched. Mnestheus shoots next, and cuts the cord which fetters her; and as she flies away a shaft from Eurytion's bow follows and kills her. There is nothing left for Acestes to do, but to shoot an arrow high in the air to show the strength of his hand and his bow. To the astonishment of the gazers, the arrow takes fire, and, leaving a trail of light on its path like a shooting-star, vanishes in the sky. It is an omen, as *Æneas* declares; it must be that the gods, in spite of facts, will him to be the real victor. So the prize—an embossed bowl, a present from the father of Hecuba to Anchises—is awarded to the

Sicilian prince, even Eurytion, the actual winner, acquiescing heartily in the arrangement. Yet the omen, as the poet tells us, really boded disaster; though whether to Sicily or to the Trojans, or how it was afterwards fulfilled, he does not stop to explain. Commentators have, as a matter of duty, done so for him; but it is hardly worth while to vex ourselves with their conjectures on a point on which Æneas himself was mistaken.

The games are over—at least, so far as the public programme seems to have gone. But Æneas has a surprise in store for his hosts. He whispers privately to the governor or tutor of his son Iulus, while he requests the company once more to clear the amphitheatre. Soon there sweeps into the ring the young chivalry of Troy—a goodly company of mounted youths, all of noble blood, who are to play out their play before their assembled seniors.

“They enter, glittering side by side,
And rein their steeds with youthful pride,
As 'neath their fathers' eyes they ride,
While all Trinacria's host and Troy's
With plaudits greet the princely boys.
Each has his hair by rule confined
With stripped-off leaves in garland twined:
Some ride with shapely bows equipped:
Two cornel spears they bear, steel-tipped:
And wreaths of twisted gold invest
The neck, and sparkle on the breast.
Three are the companies of horse,
And three the chiefs that scour the **course**:
Twelve gallant boys each chief obey,
And shine in tripartite array.

Young Priam first, Polites' heir,
Well pleased his grandsire's name to **bear**,
Leads his gay troop, himself decreed
To raise up an Italian seed :
He prances forth, all dazzling bright,
On Thracian steed with spots of white :
White on its fetlock's front is seen,
And white the space its brows between.
Then Atys, next in place, from whom
The Atian family descend :
Young Atys, fresh with life's first bloom,
The boy Iulus' sweet boy-friend :
Iulus last, in form and face
Pre-eminent his peers above,
A courser rides of Tyrian race,
Memorial gift of Dido's love.
Sicilian steeds the rest bestride
From old Acestes' stalls supplied.
The Dardanids with mingling cheers
Relieve the young aspirants' fears,
And gaze delighted, as they trace
A parent's mien in each fair face.

“ And now, when all from first to last
Beneath their kinsfolk's eyes had **past**,
Before the assembled crowd,
Epytides shrills forth from far
His signal-shout, as if for war,
And cracks his whip aloud.
In equal parts the bands divide,
And gallop off on either side :
Then wheeling round in full career
Charge at a call with levelled spear
Again, again they come and go,
Through adverse spaces to and **fro** ;
Circles in circles interlock,

And, sheathed in arms, the gazers mock
With mimicry of battle-shock.
And now they turn their backs in flight,
Now put their spears in rest,
And now in amity unite,
And ride the field abreast."

Such was the *Ludus Trojæ*—"The Game of Troy"—introduced, according to the poet, by Iulus in after-days into his new-built town of Alba, and borrowed from Alba by the Romans. Whatever its origin may have been, it was revived at Rome by Augustus, in his zeal for restorations of all kinds, as "an ancient and honourable institution." Princes of the imperial house—young Marcellus, and Tiberius the future emperor—rode, like Iulus, in the show; the emperor himself took a warm interest in it; and the eagerness of the young patricians to distinguish themselves in the various manœuvres before his eyes and those of their friends led to serious accidents. To one young horseman who was crippled by his fall Augustus gave a golden torque, and granted to him and his family permission to bear the name of "*Torquatus*"—renowned in the early annals of Rome. But other accidents happened, and led to such loud complaints that the sport was discontinued.

But while the eyes of Trojans and Sicilians are engaged with this spectacle, a terrible proceeding has taken place down on the shore. The ships, as usual, are drawn up there hard and fast upon the sand. The Trojan matrons are gathered near them, making moan for the good Anchises—for the games are a

spectacle for men. They are looking wistfully, too, across the sea, thinking how far they have sailed already, and how far they may yet have to sail. The watchful hate of Juno sees her opportunity. She despatches Iris down to them in the shape of one of their number—Beroe. She harangues them eloquently. How long will they be content to live this wandering life, in search of a distant home—which possibly has no existence but in deceitful prophecies? ✓

The disguised Iris seizes a brand and rushes towards the ships. While the rest hesitate, one of their number ✓ detects the star-like eyes and celestial gait. It is not old Beroe—nay, she, to the witness's own knowledge, lies at this very moment sick in bed. It is no less than a visitor from heaven. They hesitate no longer: they snatch the embers from the altars, and in a moment the deed is done, and the galleys are in flames. ✓ The news is brought to Æneas just as the gay parade of youths is ending; and Ascanius gallops at once down to the shore, dashes his helmet on the ground that all may know him, and implores the furious women to stay their hands. Do they fancy they are burning the war-ships of the Greeks? His voice recalls them to themselves, and in guilty fear and shame they fly to hide themselves among the rocks and woods. Æneas rends his clothes, and appeals to Jupiter. The ruler of the sky hears, and sends down a thunder-shower which drenches everything on sea and shore, so that all but four galleys escape with little damage.

But Æneas is troubled at heart. May not this mad

instinct of the women be right, after all? Were it not better to rest here in Sicily, than wander on again over the weary ocean in quest of this Western Land? He takes counsel with the Nestor of the fleet—the aged Nautes—to whom the goddess of wisdom has given an understanding spirit beyond his fellows. The old seaman's motto is one of the poet's noblest utterances *—

“Whate'er betides, he only cures
The stroke of fortune who endures.”

He bids his chief take counsel, too, with Acestes. In the visions of the night the shade of his father Anchises once more appears to him, and gives the same advice as Nautes. It is settled that the women and the old men, and all that are weary and faint-hearted, shall be left behind in Sicily, while the picked band of good men and true sail on with their leader into the west, thus their reduced number of ships will yet suffice them.† The damaged galleys are hastily repaired, and the foundations of a new town are marked out for the Trojan settlers: it is to be called Acesta, in honour of

* “*Superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est.*”

† Virgil himself has no word of reproach for these weaker spirits, who thus preferred the rest of Sicily to the far-off hopes of Hesperia. But his impassioned pupil Dante is less merciful: he classes them in his “Purgatory” with the murmuring Israelites:—

“First they died, to whom the sea
Opened, or ever Jordan saw his heirs;
And they who with Æneas to the end
Endured not suffering, for their portion chose
Life without glory.”

—Purg. xviii. (Cary.)

their kind host. The parting of the wanderers from their friends is a fine passage, finely rendered :—

“ With kindliness of gentle speech
The good Æneas comforts each,
And to their kinsman prince commends
With tears his subjects and his friends.
Three calves to Eryx next he kills ;
A lambkin’s blood to Tempest spills,
And bids them loose from land :
With olive-leaves he binds his brow,
Then takes his station on the prow,
A charger in his hand,
Flings out the entrails on the brine,
And pours a sacred stream of wine.
Fair winds escort them o’er the deep :
With emulous stroke the waves they sweep.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE SIBYL AND THE SHADES.

THE Sea-god, at Venus's intercession for her son, sends Æneas and his crews calm seas and prosperous gales. One victim only the Fates demand; Palinurus, the pilot of Æneas's ship, gives way to sleep during the quiet watches of the night, slips overboard, and is lost. The poet has clothed the whole story in a transparent mythological allegory, and which must have been intended to be transparent. Sleep is personified; Palinurus resists his first temptations; but the god waves over his eyes a bough steeped in dews of Lethe, the river of forgetfulness, and the unhappy steersman can hold out no longer. The accident happens near the shore of the twin Sirens, of whose seductions Homer has told us in the wanderings of Ulysses:—

“ A perilous neighbourhood of yore
And white with mounded bones,
Where the hoarse sea with far-heard roar
Keeps washing o'er the stones.”

Æneas discovers his loss by the unsteady course of

the galley, and takes the helm himself, until he brings the little fleet safe into the harbour of Cumæ. The crews disembark, with the joy which these seamen of old always felt when they touched land again, and proceed at once to search for water, cut wood, and light fires :—

“ Sage Dædalus—so runs the tale—
From Minos bent to fly,
On feathery pinions dared to sail
Along the untravelled sky ;
Flies northward through the polar heights, —
Nor stays till he on Cumæ lights.
First landed here, he consecrates
The wings whereon he flew
To Phœbus’ power, and dedicates
A fane of stately view.”

Here Æneas consults the mysterious Sibyl, whose oracular verses are referred to in Virgil’s Pastoral already noticed. She figures under various names in classical story—that which she bears here is Deiphobè. Her dwelling is in a cave in the rock behind the temple, with which it communicates by a hundred doors. Within sits the prophetess on a tripod, where she receives the inspiration of the god. When the oracle is pronounced, the doors all fly open, and the sound comes forth. But there is one way in which she is wont to give her answers, against which Helenus has already warned her present visitors. She has a habit of jotting down her responses in verse upon the leaves of trees—each verse apparently on a separate leaf—and then piling them one upon another

in her cave. When the doors fly open, the gust of wind whirls the leaves here and there in all directions; and the ambiguities which are proper to all oracles are considerably increased in the process of rearranging the several leaves into anything like coherent order—the Sibyl herself disdaining all further interference. So that many of her clients go away without having received any intelligible answer at all, and from that time forth “hate the very name of the Sibyl.” A modern writer,* whose poetical taste has made him one of the most interesting critics of Virgil, has thought that the confusion of the prophetic leaves was meant to symbolise the idea that the will of the gods was made known to mortals only in disjointed utterances, and under no regular law of order. Æneas, therefore, in his appeal to the prophetess, begs her specially to give her answer by word of mouth.

Deiphobè proceeds to the seat of augury, and goes through the terrible struggle which, according to all legends, invariably accompanied this form of prophecy. Even when she comes in view of the awful doors, the influence begins :—

“ Her visage pales its hue,
Her locks dishevelled fly,
Her breath comes thick, her wild heart glows ;
Dilating as the madness grows,
Her form looks larger to the eye,
Unearthly peals her deep-toned cry,
As breathing nearer and more near
The God comes rushing on his seer.”

* Keble.

The paroxysms increase after she has entered the cave, and is in the agonies of inspiration :—

“ The seer, impatient of control,
 Raves in the cavern vast,
 And madly struggles from her soul
 The incumbent power to cast.
 He, mighty Master, plies the more
 Her foaming mouth, all chafed and sore,
 Tames her wild heart with plastic hand,
 And makes her docile to command.”

At last all the hundred doors fly open at once, and the voice of destiny comes forth. The wanderers shall reach Latium safely, but they shall wish they had never reached it.

“ War, dreadful war, and Tiber flood
 I see incarnadined with blood ;
 Simois and Xanthus, and the plain
 Where Greece encamped shall rise again :
 A new Achilles, goddess-born,
 The destinies provide,
 And Juno, like a rankling thorn,
 Shall never quit your side.

The old, old cause shall stir the strife—
 A stranger bed, a foreign wife.
 Yet still despond not, but proceed
 Along the path where Fate may lead.”

Æneas hears,—undismayed. He is a true hero so far, that he is always equal to his fate. One request he makes of the Sibyl,—that he may visit the shades below, the entrance to which is said to lie here, within the prophetess's domain, and there see again the face of

his father. Deiphobè consents, but not without the solemn warning, often quoted to point a far higher moral than the heathen poet was likely to have conceived—so often, that the Latin words themselves are probably familiar even to those who profess but little Latin scholarship :—

“Facilis descensus Averni ;
Noctes atque dies patet atra janua Ditis ;
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est.”

Their terseness and pathos are not easy to reproduce in any other language, but Mr Conington has done it as well, perhaps, as it could be done :—

“The journey down to the Abyss
Is prosperous and light ;
The palace-gates of gloomy Dis
Stand open day and night ;
But upward to retrace the way,
And pass into the light of day,—
There comes the stress of labour—this
May task a hero’s might.”

Few are they of mortal birth who, by the special grace of the gods, have achieved that desperate venture with success. Still, if Æneas is determined to attempt it, she will teach him the secret of the passage. Deep in the shades of the neighbouring forest there grows a tree which bears a golden bough, which he must find and carry with him into the regions of the dead ; it is the gift which Proserpine, who reigns there, claims from all who enter her court.

Accompanied by his faithful Achates, Æneas enters

the woods in quest of the golden bough. The search seems in vain, until two white doves, the birds of his goddess-mother Venus, make their appearance, and, leading the way by short successive flights, draw the seekers on to the wondrous tree, on which they at last alight. The hero makes prize of the golden branch, with which he returns to the Sibyl. Under her directions he offers the due sacrifices to the infernal powers—four black bulls, a barren heifer, and a black ewe-lamb—and then, still under the leading of the prophetess, with drawn sword in his hand, he enters the mouth of Hades.

“ Along the illimitable shade
 Darkling and lone their way they made,
 Through the vast kingdom of the dead,
 An empty void, though tenanted.
 So travellers in a forest move
 With but the uncertain moon above,
 Beneath her niggard light,
 When Jupiter has hid from view
 The heaven, and Nature’s every hue
 Is lost in blinding night.

“ At Orcus’ portals hold their lair
 Wild Sorrow and avenging Care ;
 And pale Diseases cluster there,
 And pleasureless Decay,
 Foul Penury, and Fears that kill,
 And Hunger, counsellor of ill,
 A ghastly presence they :
 Suffering and Death the threshold keep,
 And with them Death’s blood-brother **Sleep** :
 Ill Joys with their seducing spells
 And deadly War are at the door ;

The Furies couch in iron cells,
And Discord maddens and rebels;
Her snake-locks hiss, her wreaths drip gore.

“Full in the midst an aged elm
Broods darkly o’er the shadowy realm :
There dream-land phantoms rest the wing,
Men say, and ’neath its foliage cling.
And many monstrous shapes beside
Within the infernal gates abide;
There Centaurs, Scyllas, fish and maid,
There Briareus’ hundred-handed shade,
Chimæra armed with flame,
Gorgons and Harpies make their den,
With the foul pest of Lerna’s fen,
And Geryon’s triple frame.”

Then they come in sight of the rivers of Hell—Acheron, Cocytus, and Styx. The relative physical geography is somewhat confused by the poet, but it is the Styx on which the Ferryman of the Shades, the surly Charon,—

“Grim, squalid, foul, with aspect dire,
His eyeballs each a globe of fire,”—

plies his office of transporting the dead, performing the duties which Homer assigns to Mercury. But it is not all who even in death are allowed to pass the gloomy river. Only those who have received all due rites of burial can claim to enter the final abode of spirits at once ; those unhappy ones who from any cause lie unburied have to wander, moaning and shivering, on the other side, for a space of a hundred years. So the Sibyl explains to Æneas, when he marks with surprise

how the shades all crowd eagerly to the boat-side praying for admission, and how the grisly ferryman drives some back with his oar. It is a sad thought to the hero ; for amongst the rejected he sees some of his own companions who had perished in the storm off the coast of Carthage. Among them, too, he sees the figure of his late pilot Palinurus, who tells him the story of his unhappy fate ; how, after all, he was not drowned, but, clinging to the piece of rudder which had broken away with him, had drifted three days and nights upon the waves, and had at last swam ashore on the fated coast of Italy. There the cruel natives had attacked and killed him, as he struggled up the cliffs ; and now his corpse lies tossed to and fro amid the breakers in the harbour of Velia. He prays of his leader either to sail back there and to

“ Give him a little earth for charity ; ”

or, by his influence with these Powers below, to get the law of exclusion relaxed in his favour. This last request the Sibyl rebukes at once, as utterly inorthodox and heretical ; but comforts him at the same time with the assurance that the barbarous natives shall be plagued by heaven for their abominable deed, nor shall they find deliverance until they solemnly propitiate his shade by the erection of a mound and the establishment of funeral honours, and call the spot by the name of Palinurus—which name, the Sibyl declares, shall endure there for ever. The oracular voice in this case was not deceitful : the place, or supposed place, is still called “ Punta di Palinuro.” Virgil’s

imperial audience might know it well, for Augustus was very nearly himself becoming a sacrifice on that very spot to the manes of the ancient pilot, many of his ships having been cast away on that very headland.

Charon is by no means gracious to the intruders. At first he warns them off. He has no pleasant recollections of former visitors from upper air, who, without the proper qualification of being previously dead and duly burnt or buried, had made their way against all rule into this abode of shadows. Hercules had come there, and carried off their watchful guardian Cerberus : Theseus and his friend Pirithous had even tried to do the same by Proserpine.

“My laws forbid me to convey
Substantial forms of breathing clay.
'Twas no good hour that made me take
Alcides o'er the nether lake,
Nor found I more auspicious freight
In Theseus and his daring mate;
Yet all were Heaven's undoubted heirs,
And prowess more than man's was theirs.
That from our monarch's footstool dragged
The infernal watch-dog, bound and gagged;
These strove to force from Pluto's side
Our mistress, his imperial bride.”

The Sibyl bids Charon have no fears of this kind now—Cerberus and Proserpine are safe from all designs on the part of her companion. This is Æneas of Troy, known for his “piety” as widely as for his deeds of arms. He does but seek an interview with his sire Anchises. But, if Charon be deaf to all such argu-

ments,—she shows the golden bough. The passport is irresistible. Sullenly, and without a word of reply, the dark boatman brings his craft to shore, and bids the freight of ghosts clear the decks and make room for his living passengers. The boat groans, its seams open and let in the water, as the substantial flesh and blood steps on board.* So, in the *Iliad* of Homer,

* The rickety state of Charon's boat was always a fertile source of wit to the freethinkers among the classical satirists. Lucian, in one of his very amusing dialogues, makes Charon complain of his passengers bringing luggage with them: "My boat is something rotten, look you, and lets in a good deal of water at the seams; if you come on board with all that luggage you may repent it—especially those of you who can't swim."—(*Dial. Mort.*, x.) So in another dialogue Menippus thinks it hard to be asked to pay for his passage over, when "he helped to bale the boat all the way." It may be observed that the boat is said to be made of hide, stretched on a wooden frame, like the "coracles" of the Britons, still in use on some of the Welsh rivers. There may be some connection with an ancient tradition which would identify the "white rock" of which Homer speaks (*Od.*, xxiv. 11) as marking the entrance to the regions of the dead with the cliffs of our own island—"Albion." A curious old legend of the coast of France gives some colour to the interpretation. There was a tribe of fishermen who were exempted from payment of tribute, on the ground that they ferried over into Britain the souls of the departed. At night-fall, when they were asleep (so the legend ran), they would be awakened by a loud knocking at their doors, and voices calling them, and feel a strange compulsion to go down to the sea-shore. There they found boats, not their own, ready launched, and to all appearance empty. When they stepped on board and began to ply their oars they found the boats move as though they were heavily laden, sinking within a finger's breadth of the water's edge; but they saw no man. Within an hour, as

the mortal horses and earthly chariot of Diomed groan and strain under their immortal burden, when Minerva takes her seat beside the champion.

Cerberus, in spite of Hercules, is at home again, and on the watch. His three heads and snake-wreathed neck are lifted in fury at the sight of strangers, and his bark rings through the shades. But the Sibyl has brought with her a medicated cake, which she throws down to him ; he eats, and falls at once into a heavy sleep.

Then, led by the Sibyl, the Trojan chief passes through the various regions of the world below. First they hear the cries of those infants who but just knew life in the world above, and then were snatched away from its enjoyment.* Next them come those who have been condemned to death by an unjust judgment, and for whom Minos here sits as judge of appeals. In the next region are those unhappy ones—

it seemed, they reached the opposite coast—a voyage which in their own boats they hardly made in a whole day and night. When they touched the shore of Britain still they saw no shape, but they heard voices welcoming their ghostly passengers, and calling each of the dead by name and rank. Then having got rid, as it seemed, of their invisible freight, they put off again for home, feeling their boats so sensibly lightened that hardly more than the keel touched the water.—See Gesner's *Notes on Claudian*, iii. 123 ; *Procopius, De Bell. Goth.*, iv. 20.

* We have here the foundation of the fanciful doctrine of a *Limbo Infantum*, held by some doctors of the Romish Church—a kind of vestibule to the greater Purgatory, in which were placed the souls of such children as died before they were old enough to be admitted to the sacraments.

“ Who all for loathing of the day
In madness threw their lives away :
How gladly now in upper air
Contempt and beggary would they bear,
And labour’s sorest pain !
Fate bars the way : around their keep
The slow unlovely waters creep,
And bind with three-fold chain.”

Suicide was no crime in the early pagan creed ; but Virgil has to a certain degree adopted the Platonic notion, that to take away one’s own life was to desert the post of duty. It is remarkable how thoroughly he adopts Homer’s view of the incomparable superiority of the life of the upper world to the best possible estate in the land of shadows. We have here again the sad lament of Achilles in the *Iliad*—that the life of a slave on earth was more to be desired than the colourless existence of the heroes in Elysium.

Passing from these outer circles, the travellers reach the “ Mourning Fields,” in which the poet places all the victims of love. If there was any doubt as to his view of the passion—that it was a lower appetite, excusable enough in man, but in a woman either to be reprobated or pitied according to circumstances—it would be set at rest by the characters of those victims with whom he peoples this unlovely region. Grouped together with such devoted wives as Evadne, who, when her husband fell in the Trojan war, slew herself for grief upon his funeral pile, and Laodamia, whose only crime was that by her too urgent prayers she won back her dead Protesilaus to her embrace for a few

fleeting moments, and died of joy in his arms,* we find the treacherous Eriphyle, who, for the bribe of a golden necklace, persuaded her husband Amphiaraus to go to his predestined death in the same war, and even such disgraces to their sex as were Phædra and Pasiphae. In these Mourning Fields Æneas meets one whom he would, it may be conceived, have very gladly avoided. Half veiled in mist, seen dimly like the moon through a cloud, Dido stands before him there : and thus, for the first time, he is made certain of her death. Æneas is ready with regrets, and even tears.

“She on the ground averted kept
Hard eyes that neither smiled nor wept;
Nor bated more of her stern mood,
Than if a monument she stood.”

At last, without a word, she turns from her false lover, and seeks in the dim groves the society of her dead husband Sichæus.

* “Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes reappears ;
Round the dear shade she would have clung—’tis vain,
The hours are past—too brief, had they been years ;
And him no mortal effort can detain :
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she lay.

“By no weak pity might the gods be moved ;
She who thus perished, not without the crime
Of lovers that in Reason’s spite have loved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy ghosts that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet ’mid unfading bowers.”

—WORDSWORTH’S ‘*Laodamia*’

The Sibyl leads her companion on to the Field of the Heroes. There he sees the mighty men of old : the chiefs who fought against Thebes in the great siege which preceded that of Troy—Tydeus, and Adrastus, and Parthenopæus. There, too, are the shades of his own companions in arms, who fell in defence of their city. Among these last is one who has another tale to tell of the abominable Helen. It is Deiphobus, one of the many sons of Priam, to whom Helen had been given after the death of Paris. Æneas is shocked to see the unsubstantial shape of the prince bearing the marks of barbarous mutilation ; his hands lopped, his face gashed, and his ears and nostrils cut off. (For, even in this shadowy existence, the ghosts all bear the marks of violent death — Dido's self-inflicted wound being specially mentioned.) Æneas asks the history of this terrible disfigurement, and Deiphobus tells it at some length : how the double traitoress, who was then his wife, had led Menelaus and his companion, the accursed Ulysses, to the chamber where he lay sunk in sleep on the disastrous night of the city's capture, and how they two had thus mangled his body.

But the Sibyl warns her companion, who stands absorbed in grief at his comrade's fate, that the permitted hours of their visit are fast passing away. She guides him on to where the path they are treading divides, leading in one direction to the Elysian Fields, in the other to Tartarus,—for the district which they have explored already is represented as of an entirely neutral character. On the left, Æneas sees

rise before him the broad bastions of Tartarus, round which flows the fiery stream of Phlegethon :—

“In front a portal stands displayed,
On adamantine columns stayed;
Nor mortal nor immortal foe
Those massy gates could overthrow.
An iron tower of equal might
In air uprises steep;
Tisiphonè, in red robes dight,
Sits on the threshold day and night,
With eyes that know not sleep.
Hark! from within there issue groans,
The cracking of the thong,
The clank of iron o’er the stones
Dragged heavily along.”

Æneas asks of his companion the meaning of these fearful sounds. They are the outcries of the wicked in torment. They may not be seen by human eyes; but Deiphobè herself has been shown all the horrible secrets of their prison-house by Hecate, when intrusted by that goddess with the charge of the entrance to the Shades. She tells Æneas how Rhadamanthus sits in judgment there, and forces the wicked to confess their deeds. Crimes successfully concealed on earth are there made manifest; then the culprit is handed over to the Furies for punishment. Such punishments are various as the crimes; strange and horrible in the cases of extraordinary offenders,—especially against the majesty of the gods. In the lowest gulf of all,—

“Where Tartarus, with sheer descent,
Dips ’neath the ghost-world twice as deep

As towers above earth's continent
The height of heaven's Olympian steep,"—

lie the twin giants, sons of Aloeus, who sought to storm heaven, and hurl Jupiter from his throne. There, too, is chained Salmoneus, who, counterfeiting the thunder and lightning of the Olympian ruler, was struck down by the force which he profanely imitated. Tityos, son of Earth, who dared to offer violence to the goddess Latona, lies there also, suffering the punishment assigned by the Greek mythologists to Prometheus :—

“ O'er acres nine from end to end
His vast unmeasured limbs extend ;
A vulture on his liver preys :
The liver fails not, nor decays :
Still o'er that flesh which breeds new pangs,
With crooked beak the torturer hangs,
Explores its depth with bloody fangs,
And searches for her food ;
Still haunts the cavern of his breast,
Nor lets the filaments have rest,
To endless pain renewed.”

Virgil is here more literally orthodox, and less philosophical in his creed, than his master Lucretius. For he, too, knew the story of Tityos, but saw in it only an allegory ; “every man is a Tityos,” says the elder poet, “whose heart is torn and racked perpetually by his own evil lusts and passions.” Other and various torments has the Sibyl seen ; for the selfish and covetous, for the adulterer, for the betrayer of trust, and the spoiler of the orphan ; the feast ever spread

before the hungry eyes and ever vanishing ; the rock overhanging the head of the guilty, ever ready to fall ; the stone that has to be rolled with vast labour up the hill, only to roll back again for ever ; and, most remarkable of all punishments, the doom of the restless adventurer Theseus for his attempt on Proserpine—to sit for ever in perpetual inactivity. And amidst them all rings out the warning voice of Phlegyas (condemned for having set fire to the temple of Apollo) from his place of torment :—

“Be warned—learn righteousness—and reverence heaven.”

Here again we have, it may be, a protest against the teaching of Lucretius : a distinct rejection, on Virgil's part, of the materialistic doctrine which would deny a divine Providence and human responsibility.

The whole conception of Virgil's hell is grand and terrific. Highly material and sensational, it is hardly more so than mediæval divines and artists have represented ; and indeed it is more than probable that, consciously or unconsciously, they often adopted pagan notions on the subject. In its moral teaching, whether the poet intended his descriptions to be taken in their literal sense or interpreted in the way of parable, his creed has at least the essential elements of truth.

But now the visitors turn their steps towards the Elysian fields, and after duly hanging up the golden bough at the gate for Proserpine's acceptance, they enter those abodes of the blest :—

“ Green spaces, folded in with trees,
A paradise of pleasaunces ;
Around the champaign mantles bright
The fulness of purpureal light ;
Another sun and stars they know,
That shine like ours, but shine below.”

There are assembled the illustrious dead—warriors who have died for their country ; priests of unstained life ; bards who have never perverted their powers ; all who have been benefactors of mankind,—

“ A goodly brotherhood, bedight
With coronals of virgin white.”

Shadows as they are, all the items of their happiness are material. The games of the palæstra, the song of the bard, the care of ghostly horses and ghostly chariots, form the interests of this world of spirits ; —the interests of earth, without earth’s substantial realities. The poet found his imagination fail him, as it fails us all, when he tries to paint the details of an incorporeal existence.

Among these happy spirits the hero finds his father Anchises. He recognises and addresses him. Anchises had expected the visit, and receives him with such tears of joy as spirits may shed. But when Æneas strives to embrace him, the conditions of this spiritual world forbid it :—

“ Thrice strove the son his sire to clasp ;
Thrice the vain phantom mocked his grasp :
No vision of the drowsy night,
No airy current, half so light.”

The occupation of Anchises in these regions is much more philosophical than that which is assigned to the other shades. He is contemplating the unborn rulers of the Rome that is to be; the spirits, as yet incorporeal, which are soon to receive a new body, and so go forth into upper air. Deep in a forest lies the river Lethe, and a countless multitude of forms are seen thronging its banks, to drink of the water of forgetfulness. Oblivious of all their past lives, they will thus take their place once more, in changed bodies, among the inhabitants of earth. The poet's adaptation of the Pythagorean doctrine of transmigration is none of the clearest; but he signifies that, after the lapse of a thousand years in a kind of Purgatory below, these spirits are again summoned to play their part, in new bodies, upon earth. Anchises can read their destinies; and he points out to his son the shadowy forms, like the kings in 'Macbeth,' that are to be the kings and consuls of the great Roman nation. First, those who shall reign in Alba—Silvius, that shall be born to Æneas in his new home, Capys, and Numitor; young Romulus, son of the war-god (he wears already the two-crested helmet in right of his birth), who shall transplant the sceptre to the seven-hilled city, and the kings that shall succeed him there. He shows him, too, those who shall make the future great names of the Republic—Brutus, the Decii, Camillus, Fabius, and the Scipios. But the centre of the picture is reserved for one great house:—

“ Turn hither now your ranging eye :
 Behold a glorious family,
 Your sons and sons of Rome :
 Lo ! Cæsar there and all his seed,
 Iulus’ progeny, decreed
 To pass ’neath heaven’s high dome.
 This, this is he, so oft the theme
 Of your prophetic fancy’s dream,
 Augustus Cæsar, god by birth ;
 Restorer of the age of gold
 In lands where Saturn ruled of old :
 O’er Ind and Garamant extreme
 Shall stretch his reign, that spans the earth.
 Look to that land which lies afar
 Beyond the path of sun or star,
 Where Atlas on his shoulder rears
 The burden of the incumbent spheres.
 Egypt e’en now and Caspia hear
 The muttered voice of many a seer,
 And Nile’s seven mouths, disturbed with fear,
 Their coming conqueror know.”

The future glories of Rome are described in a grand and well known passage, to the majestic rhythm of which no English translator seems able to do full justice. The poet contrasts the warlike genius of his countrymen with the softer accomplishments of their rivals :—

“ Others with softer hand may mould the brass,
 Or wake to warmer life the marble mass ;
 Plead at the bar with more prevailing force,
 Or trace more justly heaven’s revolving course :
 Roman ! be thine the sovereign arts of sway
 To rule, and make the subject world obey ;

Give peace its laws ; respect the prostrate foe ;
Abase the lofty, and exalt the low."

—SYMMONS.*

One personal sketch the poet's art had reserved to the last. Anchises points out to his visitor the shade that is to be the great Marcus Marcellus, five times consul—the "Sword of Rome," as Fabius was said to be its Shield, in the long wars with Carthage, and the conqueror of Syracuse. By his side moves the figure of an armed youth, tall and beautiful, but whose face is sad, and his eyes fixed on the ground. The company of shadows crowd round him, murmuring their admiration. Who is it? Æneas asks. It is the young Marcellus of the Empire, the hope and promise of Rome—the son of Octavia, sister of Augustus, and destined, as many thought, to be his successor. Unwillingly Anchises replies to his son's question :—

"Ah son ! compel me not to speak
The sorrows of our race !
That youth the Fates but just display
To earth, nor let him longer stay :

* But none of the recognised translations seem to come so near the spirit of the original as Lord Macaulay's paraphrase—for of course it is only a paraphrase—in his lay of "The Prophecy of Capys :"—

"Leave to the sons of Carthage
The rudder and the oar ;
Leave to the Greek his marble nymphs
And scrolls of wordy lore :
Thine, Roman, is the pilum ;
Roman, the sword is thine ;
The even trench, the bristling mound,
The legion's ordered line."

With gifts like these for aye to hold,
Rome's heart had e'en been overbold.
Ah ! what a groan from Mars's plain
Shall o'er the city sound !
How wilt thou gaze on that long train,
Old Tiber, rolling to the main
Beside his new-raised mound !
No youth of Ilium's seed inspires
With hope as fair his Latian sires :
Nor Rome shall dandle on her knee
A nursling so adored as he.
O piety ! O ancient faith !
O hand untamed in battle scathe !
No foe had lived before his sword,
Stemmed he on foot the war's red tide
Or with relentless rowel gored
His foaming charger's side.
Dear child of pity ! shouldst thou burst
The dungeon-bars of Fate accurst,
Our own Marcellus thou !
Bring lilies here, in handfuls bring :
Their lustrous blooms I fain would fling
Such honour to a grandson's shade
By grandsire hands may well be paid :
Yet O ! it 'vails not now !"

He had died not long before, in his twentieth year, intensely lamented both by his family and the people.

The recital of the passage by the poet before his imperial audience had a more striking effect than even he himself could have expected. Octavia swooned away, and had to be removed by her attendants,—sending, however, magnificent presents afterwards to the poet for his eulogy on her dead son.*

* Virgil is said to have received from her what would amount,

The biographers add, that Augustus commanded Virgil to read no further on that day, and that the poet replied he had already ended the subject. He has not much more to say in this Sixth Book. Anchises gives his son some prophetic intimations as to his future fortunes in Italy, and then escorts his visitors to the gates of Sleep.

“Sleep gives his name to portals twain :
One all of horn, they say,
Through which authentic spectres gain
Quick exit into day,
And one which bright with ivory gleams,
Whence Pluto sends delusive dreams.
Conversing still, the sire attends
The travellers on their road,
And through the ivory portal sends
From forth the unseen abode.”

The lines have been taken to mean that this visit to the shades was, after all, but a dream.

in our money, to above £2000—“a round sum,” remarks Dryden, with something like professional envy, “for twenty-seven verses.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE TROJANS LAND IN LATIUM.

It has been said that this poem combines in some degree the characters both of the *Iliad* and of the *Odyssey*. Up to this point we have had the wanderings and adventures of the Trojan hero: he has been the Ulysses of his own tale. Henceforth we have a tale of the camp and the battle-field, of siege and defence, and personal combat; and we are reminded, in almost every passage, of the stirring scenes of the *Iliad*.

Æneas, on his ascent into upper air, rejoins his crew, and the fleet, setting sail from Cumæ, enters the noble harbour of Caieta. Not that the place had any such name as yet; but there the hero buries his old nurse, and gives her name to the spot. Once more embarking, they pass the promontory of Circe, and hear, as they sail by, the roars and yells of the unhappy prisoners, changed by the spells of the sorceress into the shape of brutes, whom she holds in bondage there. They listen and shudder, and bless the favouring gale which bears them away from such perilous neighbourhood. Then, with the morrow's dawn, the fleet enters the

mouth of the Tiber. The picture of the galleys going up the stream is very beautiful:—

“The sea was reddening with the dawn :
 The queen of morn on high
 Was seen in rosy chariot drawn
 Against a saffron sky,
 When on the bosom of the deep
 The Zephyrs dropped at once to sleep,
 And, struck with calm, the tired oars strain
 Against the smooth unmoving main.
 Now from the deep Æneas sees
 A mighty grove of glancing trees.
 Embowered amid the silvan scene
 Old Tiber winds his banks between,
 And in the lap of ocean pours
 His gulfy stream, his sandy stores.
 Around, gay birds of diverse wing,
 Accustomed there to fly or sing,
 Were fluttering on from spray to spray
 And soothing ether with their lay.
 He bids his comrades turn aside
 And landward set each vessel's head,
 And enters in triumphant pride
 The river's shadowy bed.”

War is now the subject, and Homer is the model. Yet the Roman poet never shows his individual genius more strongly than in his treatment of the external scenery amidst which his action lies. He is still the worshipper of Nature, even while he sets himself to sing of battles, as he was in his Pastorals and Georgics. Homer tells us of the rivers of the Troad, Simois and Scamander—but it is only as they affect Hector or Achilles; his heart is all the while with the combat-

ants, not with the flowing river. Not so Virgil: with him we feel the cool breeze, we see the glancing shadow of the trees upon the river, we hear the flutter of the startled birds, and the long plash of the oars in the water: we sail with Æneas on a party of pleasure, rather than a voyage of conquest.

Latium is reached at last. They moor their galleys under the trees which fringe the river-banks, and land to make their morning meal. It is but a scant one. Such wild fruits as they can collect are laid upon the wheaten cakes which they have brought with them, and when the fruit is finished they attack the cakes themselves. "Lo!" exclaims Iulus—"we are eating our tables!" Joyfully Æneas recognises, in the boy's involuntary interpretation, the fulfilment of the curse of the Harpies,* and of certain strange words of his father Anchises, that when they were reduced to "eat their tables," then they had found their destined home, and might begin to build their city. This, then, is their promised rest. He pours libations and offers prayers to the gods of the land, and peals of thunder from a cloudless sky seem to announce that the invocation is accepted.

As soon as the moon rises, scouts are sent out to explore the country. The king of the land is old Latinus, whose palace is near at hand. He has one only daughter, Lavinia, for whose hand all the neighbouring princes have long been suitors. Turnus of Ardea, the gallant chief of the Rutuli, tallest and handsomest of all the rivals, has the goodwill of the

* See p. 66.

queen-mother; the maiden's own choice in such a matter being the last consideration which would enter into the thought of a Roman poet. When the Trojan chief has thus informed himself in some measure as to the localities, he sends a formal embassy to King Latinus's court, carrying presents in token of goodwill. Meanwhile he busies himself in hurriedly marking out the boundaries of his new town, and fencing it round with an earthen rampart and a palisade.

The strangers are ushered into the presence of Latinus, where he sits in his ancestral palace, surrounded by the cedar statues of the demi-gods and heroes of his line.

“There too were spoils of bygone wars
Hung on the portals,—captive cars,
Strong city-gates with massive bars,
And battle-axes keen,
And plummy cones from helmets shorn,
And beaks from vanquished vessels torn,
And darts, and bucklers sheen.”

He knows at once who his visitors are. Strange portents had long disturbed his court, and had warned him that his daughter must wed with no prince of Latian race: that a foreign host and a stranger bridegroom will come to claim her, and that the kings who shall spring from this union will spread the Latian name from sea to sea. He inquires the strangers' errand courteously, and the Trojan Ilioneus, as spokesman of the embassy, thus makes reply:—

“We come not to your friendly coast
By random gale o'er ocean tost,

Nor land nor star has made us stray
From our determined line of way :
Of steady purpose one and all
We flock beneath your city wall,
Driven from an empire, greater none
Within the circuit of the sun.
Jove is our sire : to Jove's high race
We, Dardans born, our lineage trace :
Jove's seed, the monarch we obey,
Æneas, sends us here to-day.
How fierce a storm from Argos sent
On Ida's plains its fury spent,
How Fate in dire collision hurled
The eastern and the western world,
E'en he has heard, whom earth's last verge
Just separates from the circling surge,
And he who, to his kind unknown,
Dwells midmost 'neath the torrid zone.
Swept by that deluge o'er the foam
For our lorn gods we ask a home :
A belt of sand is all we crave,
And man's free birthright, air and wave.
We shall not shame your Latin crown,
Nor light shall be your own renown,
Nor time obliterate the debt,
Nor Italy the hour regret
When Troy with outstretched arms she met.
I swear it by Æneas' fate,
By that right hand which makes him great.
In peace and war approved alike
A friend to aid, a foe to strike,
Full oft have mighty nations—nay,
Disdain not that unsought we pray,
Nor deem that wreaths and lowly speech
The grandeur of our name impeach—
Full oft with zeal and earnest prayers
Have nations wooed us to be theirs ;

But Heaven's high fate, with stern command,
Impelled us still to this your land.
Here Dardanus was born, and here
Apollo bids our race return :
To Tyrrhene Tiber points the seer
And pure Numicius' hallowed urn.
These presents too our hands convey,
Scant relics of a happier day,
From burning Ilium snatched away.
From this bright gold before the shrine
His sire Anchises poured the wine :
With these adornments Priam sate
'Mid gathering crowds in kingly state,
The sceptre and the diadem :
Troy's women wrought the vesture's hem."

The king mused thoughtfully for a while : but he
recognises the fulfilment of the auguries. Let Æneas
come—he is welcome. If this be the bridegroom sent by
heaven, he shall be more welcome still. He sends back
the ambassadors in right royal fashion, all mounted on
choice horses from his own stud, and with a chariot of
honour to convey their chief to an interview.

Juno's relentless hatred is stirred once more. Will
neither fire nor sword kill, nor water drown, these
accursed Trojans? Shall she, the Queen of Heaven,
be baffled by a mortal like Æneas? If it be written
in the fates that he is to wed Lavinia, her marriage-
dower shall be paid in Trojan and Latian blood.
Venus shall find that she, like Hecuba, has borne a
firebrand—that Æneas, like Paris, shall light a flame
that shall consume his nation. If the powers of
heaven will not take her part, she will seek aid from

hell. She summons the Fury Alecto from the shades below, and bids her sow strife between the people of Latinus and their foreign visitors.

The Fury, rejoicing in her errand, seeks the chamber of Latinus's queen, and darts into her breast one of the living serpents that serve her for coils of hair. Straightway the queen is seized with madness, and, after vainly trying to rouse her husband to oppose this foreign marriage, she rushes like a Bacchanal through the neighbouring villages, and calls upon the mothers of Latium to avenge her wrongs and rescue her daughter.

Next the Fury instils the same venom into the heart of Turnus, where he lies in his town of Ardea. He has been the champion of Latium against their enemies the Tuscans, and this is their gratitude—to give his promised bride to another! The young chief leaps from his couch, calls madly for his arms, and orders an instant march upon Latinus's capital. He will expel these intruders at once, and demand the princess from her father by force of arms.

Meanwhile—still at the instigation of Alecto—the seeds of quarrel have been sown between the men of Latium and their Trojan guests. There is a tame deer which has been nursed in the house of Tyrrheus, the ranger of the royal forest,—a pet and favourite with all the country-folk.

“Fair Sylvia, daughter of the race,
Its horns with leaves would interlace,
Comb smooth its shaggy coat, and lave
Its body in the crystal wave.

Tame and obedient, it would stray
Free through the woods a summer's day,
And home again at night repair,
E'en of itself, how late soe'er."

In evil hour Ascanius, riding out with a hunting-party, gets his hounds upon the scent, and shoots the poor animal as it floats quietly down the river in the noon-day heat. It has just strength to carry the Trojan arrow in its body to its mistress's door, and die moaning at her feet.* Tyrrheus and his household are mad with rage, and rouse the whole country-side against this wanton outrage, as they hold it, on the part of the strangers. The shepherd's horn sounds out its summons to the whole neighbourhood; and the angry rustics, when they hear the story, seize axes, staves, and such rude weapons as come first to hand, and attack the young prince and his hunting-party. — The Trojans come out from their intrenchment to rescue their friends, and the fray now becomes a regular battle, no longer fought with stakes and hunting implements, but with sword and spear. Blood is soon shed; the rustic weapons are no match for the Trojan steel; and young Almo, the ranger's son, is carried home dead, amongst others. Almost a sadder loss is

* Andrew Marvell most likely borrowed his thought from the Roman poet in his graceful lines, "The Nymph's Complaint :"—

"The wanton troopers, riding by,
Have shot my fawn, and it will die.
Ungentle men ! they cannot thrive
Who killed thee. Thou ne'er didst alive
Them any harm, alas ! nor could
Thy death yet do them any good."

that of the good old yeoman Galæsus, who yokes a hundred ploughs, and whose character gives him even more influence than his wealth. He is slain as he stands between the combatants, vainly pleading for peace.

The bodies are carried through the city streets, as in a modern revolution, by way of demonstration. There they make their dumb appeal to the passions of the people—

“Young Almo in his comely grace,
And old Galæsus’ mangled face”—

and the appeal is answered by a universal cry for
“**War!**”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MUSTER OF THE LATIN TRIBES.

TURNUS arrives amongst them from Ardea at this critical moment, and shouts fiercely for instant battle. In vain does King Latinus quote the oracle, and refuse to fight against the destinies. He will be no party to a bloody and useless war. But the impetuosity of an angry populace is too strong for him. Powerless to stem the popular current, he nevertheless delivers his own soul, and abdicates his sovereignty. The guilt of the blood that shall be shed must rest on those who stir the war. He warns Turnus that he may yet live to rue the part he has taken, when too late : for himself, death will soon put an end to all troubles.

By an old tradition,—handed on, as the poet will have it, from these old days of Latium to the Rome of Augustus,—the powers of War were held to be confined within the gates of Janus, the porter of the Immortals, only to be let loose by solemn act of state authority.

“ Two gates there stand of War—’twas so
Our fathers named them long ago—

The war-god's terrors round them spread
 An atmosphere of sacred dread.
 A hundred bolts the entrance guard,
 And Janus there keeps watch and ward.
 These, when his peers on war decide,
 The consul, all in antique pride
 Of Gabine cincture deftly tied
 And purple-striped attire,
 With grating noise himself unbars,
 And calls aloud on Father Mars :
 The warrior train takes up the cry,
 And horns with brazen symphony
 Their hoarse assent conspire."

Since Latinus will not do his office, Juno in person—
 so the poet has it—descends from heaven, smites upon
 the barred portals, and "lets slip the dogs of war."

" Ausonia, all inert before,
 Takes fire and blazes to the core :
 And some on foot their march essay,
 Some, mounted, storm along the way ;
 To arms ! cry one and all :
 With unctuous lard their shields they clean,
 And make their javelins bright and sheen,
 Their axes on the whetstone grind ;
 Look how that banner takes the wind !
 Hark to yon trumpet's call !
 Five mighty towns, with anvils set,
 In emulous haste their weapons whet :
 Crustumium, Tibur the renowned,
 And strong Atina there are found,
 And Ardea, and Antennæ crowned
 With turrets round her wall.
 Steel caps they frame their brows to fit,
 And osier twigs for bucklers knit :

Or twist the hauberk's brazen mail
And mould them greaves of silver pale :
To these has passed the homage paid
Erewhile to ploughshare, scythe, and spade :
Each brings his father's battered blade,
And smelts in fire anew :
And now the clarions pierce the skies :
From rank to rank the watchword flies :
This tears his helmet from the wall,
That drags his war-horse from the stall,
Dons three-piled mail and ample shield,
And girds him for the embattled field
With falchion tried and true."

The whole remaining portion of this seventh book is in Virgil's most spirited style. And it is here that the harp of our northern minstrel answers best to Mr Conington's touch. The gathering of the clans—for it is nothing else—the rapid sketches of the chiefs as they pass in succession with their array of followers—the details of costume—the legendary tale which the poet has to tell of more than one of them as he passes them in review—even the devices borne on the shields, — are all features in which Scott delighted as thoroughly as Virgil, and which his well-known rhythm suits better than any other which a translator could choose. Some few portions of this stirring war-like diorama must content the readers of these pages. The first who passes is the terrible chief of Agylla, who fears neither god nor man, and whose notorious cruelties have so exasperated his own people against him that he is now a refugee in the court of Turnus :—

“Mezentius first from Tyrrhene coast,
 Who mocks at heaven, arrays his host,
 And braves the battle’s storm ;
 His son, young Lausus, at his side,
 Excelled by none in beauty’s pride,
 Save Turnus’ comely form :
 Lausus, the tamer of the steed,
 The conqueror of the silvan breed,
 Leads from Agylla’s towers in vain
 A thousand youths, a valiant train :
 Ah happy, had the son been blest
 In hearkening to his sire’s behest,
 Or had the sire from whom he came
 Had other nature, other name !”

In the description of the next leader we have **some** notice of early heraldry:—

“Next drives along the grassy meads
 His palm-crowned car and conquering steeds
 Fair Aventinus, princely heir
 Of Hercules the brave and fair,
 And for his proud escutcheon takes
 His father’s Hydra and her snakes.
 ’Twas he that priestess Rhea bare,
 A stealthy birth, to upper air,
 ’Mid shades of woody Aventine
 Mingling her own with heavenly blood,
 When triumph-flushed from Geryon slain
 Alcides touched the Latian plain,
 And bathed Iberia’s distant kine
 In Tuscan Tiber’s flood.
 Long pikes and poles his bands uprear,
 The shapely blade, the Sabine spear.
 Himself on foot, with lion’s skin,

Whose long white teeth with ghastly grin
 Clasp like a helmet brow and chin,
 Joins the proud chiefs in rude attire,
 And flaunts the emblem of his sire."

Coras and Catillus, twin-brothers from the old town of Tibar; Cæculus, from the neighbouring Præneste—reputed son of Vulcan, because said to have been found as an infant lying amidst the forge embers—whose following take the field with slings and javelins, each man with his left foot bare to give him firmer stepping-hold; Clausus the Sabine, from whom sprang the great house of the Claudii—some of whom assuredly were listening to the poet's recitation; Halæsus, of the seed of Agamemnon, sworn foe to all who bear the hated name of Trojan; and a host of chiefs of lesser name and inferior powers, join the march. Messapus, the "horse-tamer," brings with him a powerful band of retainers from many a city, who chant the deeds of their leaders as they go—

"Like snow-white swans in liquid air,
 When homeward from their food they fare,
 And far and wide melodious notes
 Come rippling from their slender throats,
 While the broad stream and Asia's fen
 Reverberate to the sound again.
 Sure none had thought that countless crowd
 A mail-clad company;
 It rather seemed a dusky cloud
 Of migrant fowl, that, hoarse and loud,
 Press landward from the sea.

.

“ Came too from old Marruvia’s realm,
An olive-garland round his helm,
Bold Umbro, priest at once and knight,
By king Archippus sent to fight :
Who baleful serpents knew to steep
By hand and voice in charmed sleep,
Soothed their fierce wrath with subtlest skill,
And from their bite drew off the ill.
But ah ! his medicines could not heal
The death-wound dealt by Dardan steel :
His slumberous charms availed him nought,
Nor herbs on Marsian mountains sought,
And cropped with magic shears :
For thee Anguitia’s woody cave,
For thee the glassy Fucine wave,
For thee the lake shed tears.”

Nearly last of the warlike array, who all acknowledge him as their leader, comes the prince of the Rutuli, Æneas’s rival and enemy :—

“ In foremost rank see Turnus move,
His comely head the rest above :
On his tall helm with triple cone
Chimæra in relief is shown ;
The monster’s gaping jaws expire
Hot volumes of Ætnean fire :
And still she flames and raves the more
The deeper floats the field with gore.
With bristling hide and lifted horns,
Io, all gold, his shield adorns,
E’en as in life she stood ;
There too is Argus, warder stern,
And Inachus from graven urn,
Her father, pours his flood.”

He brings with him the largest host of all—a cloud of

well-armed footmen of various tribes, whose shields seem to cover the plain.

This pretty picture of Camilla, the Volscian huntress (whom Dryden very ungallantly terms a “virago”), vowed from her childhood to Diana—the prototype of Tasso’s Clorinda, but far more attractive—closes at once the warlike pageant and the book:—

“Last marches forth for Latium’s sake
 Camilla fair, the Volscian maid,
 A troop of horsemen in her wake
 In pomp of gleaming steel arrayed ;
 Stern warrior-queen ! those tender hands
 Ne’er plied Minerva’s ministries :
 A virgin in the fight she stands,
 Or wingèd winds in speed outvies ;
 Nay, she could fly o’er fields of grain
 Nor crush in flight the tapering wheat,
 Or skim the surface of the main
 Nor let the billows touch her feet.
 Where’er she moves, from house and land
 The youths and ancient matrons throng,
 And fixed in greedy wonder stand,
 Beholding as she speeds along :
 In kingly dye that scarf was dipped :
 ’Tis gold confines those tresses’ flow :
 Her pastoral wand with steel is tipped,
 And Lycian are her shafts and bow.” *

* No doubt the Camilla of the Roman poet is a reminiscence of the Amazon Penthesilea in Homer, just as the fairy footstep, that left no trace on sea or land, is borrowed from those wondrous mares of Erichonius to whom Homer assigns the same performance. But the copy far surpasses the original in grace and beauty. Our English poets have made free use of this fancy of the footsteps of beauty none more sweetly than Jonson

The story of Camilla's infancy, which is given us subsequently, is quite in accordance with this description. Her father, driven from his territory, like Mezentius, by an angry people, had carried his infant daughter with him in his flight. Hard pressed by his pursuers, he came to the banks of a river. To swim across the stream, though swollen by winter torrents, were easy for himself: but how to carry his child? With brief prayer and vow to the huntress Diana, he tied her to a spear, and threw her across. The child alighted safely on the other side, and the father followed. Fed on mares' milk, and exercised from infancy in the use of the bow, Camilla had grown up in the forest, vowed to maidenhood and to Diana.

in his 'Sad Shepherd, where Æglamour laments his lost Earinè:—

“ Here she was wont to go, and here, and here—
 Just where those daisies, pinks, and violets grow;
 The world may find the spring by following her,
 For other print her airy steps ne'er left.
 Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
 Or shake the downy blow-bell from his stalk:
 But like the south-west wind she shot along,
 And where she went the flowers took thickest root,
 As she had sowed them with her odorous foot.”

—The 'Sad Shepherd,' Act I. sc. 1.

CHAPTER IX.

ÆNEAS MAKES ALLIANCE WITH EVANDER.

THE turn of events gives the Trojan chief much natural disquiet. All Latium is in arms against his little force of adventurers. He lies down within his lines to a disturbed and anxious rest, where he has a remarkable vision. A figure rises, wrapped in a grey mantle, with his brows crowned with reed. It is "Father Tiber," the tutelary genius of the Rome that shall be. He bids his visitor be of good cheer : his coming has been long looked for. He renews, for his encouragement, the old oracle of Anchises :—

“ On woody banks before your eye
A thirty-farrowed sow shall lie,
Her whole white length on earth stretched out,
Her young, as white, her teats about,
Sign that when thirty years come round
‘ White Alba ’ shall Ascanius found.”

He will find allies, too, within reach. A colony from Arcadia have migrated to Italy under their king Evander, and have founded in the neighbouring mountains

a city called Pallanteum. He will reach the place by sailing up the stream, and from them, ever at feud with their Latian neighbours, he will get the aid he requires.

Æneas wakes from sleep, arms the crews of two of his galleys, and begins his voyage up the course of the friendly Tiber, who purposely calms his waves and moderates his current. The sow with her thirty young is soon found, and duly sacrificed, as the river-genius has warned him, to propitiate the wrath of Juno. Evander, with his son Pallas and all his people, is keeping high festival to Hercules, when the masts of the Trojan galleys are suddenly seen among the trees as they turn a bend of the river. The strangers are hailed by Pallas; and Æneas, bearing in his hand the olive-bough of a suppliant, is led by the young chief before his father. In a well-studied speech he claims kindred with the Arcadian hero, albeit a Trojan and Greek might at first sight seem natural enemies. Dardanus of Troy traced his descent from Atlas — Evander's genealogy goes back to the same great ancestor. Their mutual enmity with the Latians should be also a bond of union: and lo! Æneas has shown his goodwill and confidence in thus placing himself fearlessly in Evander's power. Evander is the Nestor of the Æneid;—somewhat given to long stories and reminiscences of his own youth. He had known his present visitor's father well, in the years gone by, when the Trojan court had visited the country of Priam's sister Hesione.

“A boy was I, a stripling lad,
My cheek with youth’s first blossom clad ;
I gazed at Priam and his train
Of Trojan lords, and gazed again :
But great Anchises, princely tall,
Was more than Priam, more than all.
With boyish zeal I schemed and planned
To greet the chief, and grasp his hand.
I ventured, and with eager zest
To Pheneus brought my honoured guest.
A Lycian quiver he bestowed
At parting, with its arrowy load,
A gold-wrought scarf, and bridle-reins
Of gold, which Pallas still retains.”

He tells his visitor also, at very considerable length, the story of Hercules slaying the monster Cacus, son of Vulcan, half man and half beast, whose breath was as flames of fire, and whose diet was human flesh—the prototype of the giants of later fiction. He points out also to his guest the local features of the country—for they are standing on the site which is to be Rome, and Pallanteum is to become the Palatine mount of future history. Whatever of mythical legend the poet mixed up in his topography, he knew the interest with which his patrician audience—for antiquarianism was almost as fashionable in the court of the Cæsars as it is now—would listen while, by the mouth of Evander, he dwelt on the old historic localities of the imperial city: the Carmental gate, named after the nymph who was Evander’s mother; the grove where Romulus in after-days made his first “Asylum” for the motley band whom he gathered round him; the

Tarpeian rock ; the hill on which was to stand the Capitol ; the Janiculum, with its Saturnian walls, the key of Rome's defences. "Now"—says the poet, speaking in his own person of the glories of the great city in his own day,—

“ Now all is golden—then 'twas all
 O'ergrown with trees and brushwood tall.
 E'en their rude hinds the spot revered :

 Here in this grove, these wooded steeps,
 Some god unknown his mansion keeps ;
 Arcadia's children deem
 Their eyes have looked on Jove's own form,
 When oft he surmons cloud and storm,
 And seen his ægis gleam.”

A league is made between the Trojans and their new friends. King Evander confesses that his own power is small, but Æneas has arrived at a fortunate conjuncture. The Etruscans of Agylla, who have just expelled their tyrant Mezentius for his cruelties, have determined to pursue him to the death. But they have been warned by their soothsayer to choose a foreign leader ; and here they are at the gates of Pallanteum, come to beseech Evander to head their expedition. He is himself too old—his son Pallas too inexperienced ; he at once presents to them Æneas as a heaven-sent leader. The omens are all favourable, and both troops and commander are well pleased. Æneas selects the best of his crew, whom Evander furnishes with war-horses ; the rest he sends back in the galleys to bear the tidings of his own movements

to his son Iulus, and to charge him and the Trojans to keep close within their rampart, in case of attack during his absence. Taking command of his Etruscan allies, and followed by four hundred Arcadian horse under the young Pallas, whom his father gladly sends, as the youths of noble houses were sent in the days of knighthood, to learn the art of war under so great a captain, Æneas sets out on his march for Turnus's capital. The old king does not part from his son without sad misgivings; he has trusted Æneas with more than his life.

Venus has not been neglectful of her son. She has persuaded Vulcan to forge for him weapons and armour of such sort as only the immortal smith can make. The fire-god can never resist her blandishments; and he goes down to the forge where the Cyclops are ever at work, in the caverns beneath the Lipari Islands, off the coast of Sicily. There is much business in hand there already. Some of the one-eyed workmen are forging bolts for Jupiter, composed of four elements,—

“Three rays they took of forky hail,
Of watery cloud three rays,
Three of the wingèd southern gale,
Three of the ruddy blaze.”*

Some are finishing a war-chariot for Mars; others are shaping an ægis for Minerva—a shield of dragon's scales and rings of gold. But their master bids them

* The thunderbolt is usually represented on ancient coins and medallions with twelve rays.

put all these tasks aside; War, and Wisdom, and even Government itself, must be content to come to a standstill, until the behests of Beauty have been obeyed.

The idea of the Shield of Æneas, which Venus comes and lays before him while he sleeps, is of course borrowed directly from Homer's Shield of Achilles. But the working out of it is quite original. Vulcan's subject, in this case, is not, as in the Shield of the Iliad, an epitome of human life, but a prophetic history of Rome. The whole passage in which it is elaborately described is of remarkable beauty even to our modern taste, and upon a Roman's ear and imagination must have had a wonderful effect. The story is told in eight (or perhaps nine) compartments, filled with the leading events in the great city's existence. The two first contain the birth of Romulus, and the union of the Romans with the Sabines, which began with the seizure of the Sabine women:—

“ There too the mother-wolf he made
In Mars's cave supinely laid :
Around her udders undismayed
The gamesome infants hung,
While she, her loose neck backward thrown,
Caressed them fondly, one by one,
And shaped them with her tongue.
Hard by, the towers of Rome he drew
And Sabine maids in public view
Snatched 'mid the Circus games :
So 'twixt the fierce Romulean brood
And Tatius with his Cures rude
A sudden war upflames.

And now the kings, their conflict o'er,
Stand up in arms Jove's shrine before,
From goblets pour the sacred wine,
And make their peace o'er bleeding swine."

The doom of Mettius the Alban, and the keeping of the Tiber bridge by Horatius against Lars Porsena, occupy the two next compartments. Next comes the defence of the Capitol against the Gauls by Manlius:—

"A silver goose in gilded walls
With flapping wings announced the Gauls;
And through the wood the invaders crept,
And climbed the height while others slept.
Golden their hair on head and chin:
Gold collars deck their milk-white skin:
Short cloaks with colours checked
Shine on their backs: two spears each wields
Of Alpine make: and oblong shields
Their brawny limbs protect."

In the succeeding compartments are wrought the procession of the Salii with the sacred shields, and the regions of the world below, where Catiline lies in torment, while Cato has his portion with the just. And within the whole, round the *umbo* or boss of the shield, there runs a sea of molten gold in which sport silver dolphins, framing the centre design—the glories of Augustus:—

"There in the midmost meet the sight
The embattled fleets, the Actian fight:
Leucate flames with warlike show,
And golden-red the billows glow.

Here Cæsar, leading from their home
The fathers, people, gods of Rome,
 Stands on the lofty stern:
The constellation of his sire
Beams o'er his head, and tongues of fire
 About his temples burn,
With favouring Gods and winds to speed
 Agrippa forms his line:
The golden beaks, war's proudest meed,
 High on his forehead shine.
There, with barbaric troops increased,
Antoniùs, from the vanquished East,
 And distant Red-sea side,
To battle drags the Bactrian bands
And Egypt; and behind him stands
 (Foul shame!) the Egyptian bride."

There the gods of Rome—conspicuous amongst whom is the archer Apollo, the tutelary deity of the house of Cæsar—put to flight the dog-headed Anubis, and the other monstrous gods of Egypt. There, too, is blazoned the "triple triumph" of Augustus, graced by a long procession of captives of all tribes, from Scythia to the Euphrates.

"Such legends traced on Vulcan's shield
 The wondering chief surveys:
On truth in symbol half revealed
 He feeds his hungry gaze,
And high upon his shoulders rears
 The fame and fates of unborn years."

CHAPTER X.

TURNUS ATTACKS THE TROJAN ENCAMPMENT.

ÆNEAS had been right in his forebodings of danger. Turnus has heard of the chief's absence, and takes advantage of it to lead his force at once against the new-built fortification in which the rest of the Trojans lie. His first attempt is to burn their galleys, where they lie drawn ashore on the river-bank, close to their lines. But the ships are built of the sacred pines of Ida, the special favourites of the great goddess Cybele; and she has endued them, by favour of Jupiter, with the power of transformation into sea-nymphs when their work is done. No sooner do the torches of the enemy touch them than they slide off into the water, and in their new shape float out to sea. Even this portent does not scare the leader of the Rutuli. "Lo!" he cries—"Heaven takes from our enemies even their hopes of flight!" He does but draw his leaguer all the closer round the Trojan lines. Throughout the night the watch-fires blaze at close intervals, and captains of the guard, each with a hundred men, are set at their several posts to prevent the escape of the prey

before the general attack which is ordered for the morning.

But the Rutulian chieftains grow weary of a monotonous duty. They have store of wine in their camp, and they bring it out to cheer their night-watch. The sounds of noisy revelry soon rise from every station, until, as the revellers are gradually overpowered by sleep, all is lulled into unusual silence.

Two Trojan sentinels have watched anxiously every sound and movement in the enemy's lines. They are Nisus and his young friend Euryalus,—late among the competitors in the foot-race—inseparable in peace or war. Nisus sees, as he thinks, an opportunity for stealing through the Rutulian guards, and bearing news to Æneas at Pallanteum of the peril in which his son and his companions lie. He is a keen sportsman, and knows the forest by-paths well. He confides his design to Euryalus, but has no notion of taking the youth with him to share the danger. He, on the other hand, insists upon accompanying his friend. The consent of Iulus and his elder counsellors is readily obtained. Let them but bring back Æneas to the rescue, and no rewards and honours shall be too great for the pair. Turnus's horse and armour, Latinus's royal demesne, captives of price, shall be the guerdon of Nisus: for Euryalus,—the prince will adopt him henceforth as his personal esquire and companion in arms. One only request the youth has to make. He has an aged mother in the camp—the only one of the elder matrons who refused to be left in safety with Acestes in Sicily, and whom no dangers

could separate from her son. Will the prince promise her solace and protection, should harm befall Euryalus on the way? The answer of Iulus is given in tears; he has no mother left, and the mother of Euryalus shall be to him as his own. He girds the youth with the sword from his own side, and the friends set out upon their perilous errand, escorted to the gates by the Trojan captains with prayers and blessings.

The enterprise might have succeeded, had not the two friends been tempted, by the helpless state in which they found the Rutulian camp, to slaughter their sleeping enemies as they passed. Rhamnes and Remus—names to be borne hereafter by more historic actors in the history of Rome—with a crowd of victims of lesser note, fall by the swords of Nisus and his companion. Euryalus even stops, with a young man's vanity, to put on the glittering belt which he has stripped from one of his victims, and the helmet of the sleeping Messapus. Thus precious time is lost, and the moonlight streams upon them as they clear the Rutulian lines, and take the path, which Nisus knows, for Pallanteum.

A detachment of the enemy's cavalry is on the march to join Turnus. The glimmer of the moonlight on Euryalus's helmet—his new prize—betrays the friends as they try to steal by, and they are challenged at once by Volscens, the commander. They fly to the neighbouring wood; but the horsemen surround it, and though Nisus escapes them, it is only to find that his friend has fallen into their hands. He rushes back, and in the wild hope of

effecting a rescue, hides himself in the thicket, whence he launches two spears with fatal effect upon the party who are dragging along their prisoner. Enraged at the sudden attack, and seeing no enemy in the darkness, Volscens lays hold upon Euryalus, and vows revenge. Nisus rushes from his cover, and implores them to turn their swords on him, and to spare a youth whose only crime has been his friendship.

“In vain he spoke: the sword, fierce driven,
That alabaster breast had riven.
Down falls Euryalus, and lies
In death’s enthralling agonies:
Blood trickles o’er his limbs of snow;
His head sinks gradually low:
Thus, severed by the ruthless plough,
Dim fades a purple flower:
Their weary necks so poppies bow,
O’erladen by the shower.
But Nisus on the midmost flies,
With Volscens, Volscens in his eyes:
In clouds the warriors round him rise,
Thick hailing blow on blow:
Yet on he bears, no stint, no stay;
Like thunderbolt his falchion’s sway:
Till as for aid the Rutule shrieks
Plunged in his throat the weapon reeks.
The dying hand has reft away
The lifeblood of its foe.
Then, pierced to death, asleep he fell
On the dead breast he loved so well.”

With the first dawn Turnus leads his forces to the attack—the heads of Nisus and Euryalus borne in front upon the points of spears, so savage is the Rutu-

lian at the slaughter made by them amongst his sleeping comrades. The mother of Euryalus has heard the news, and sees the ghastly trophies from the ramparts. Iulus performs his promise, and the frantic woman is, under his personal directions, tenderly removed. He himself becomes the hero of the day. The archer's craft, his love of which had led to the feud with the Latins, is turned to good service in the defence of the camp. Numanus, a brother-in-law of Turnus, is loudly taunting the Trojans in front of their lines :—

“Twice captured Phrygians! to be pent
 Once more in leaguèred battlement,
 And plant unblushingly between
 Yourselves and death a stony screen!
 Lo, these the men that draw their swords
 To part our ladies from their lords!
 What god, what madness brings you here
 To taste of our Italian cheer?
 No proud Atridæ leads our vans:
 No false Ulysses talks and plans:
 E'en from the birth a hardy brood,
 We take our infants to the flood,
 And fortify their tender mould
 With icy wave and ruthless cold.
 Early and late our sturdy boys
 Seek through the woods a hunter's joys:
 Their pastime is to tame the steed,
 To bend the bow and launch the reed.
 Our youth, to scanty fare inured,
 Made strong by labour oft endured,
 Subdue the soil with spade and rake,
 Or city walls with battle shake.
 Through life we grasp our trusty spear:
 It strikes the foe, it goads the steer:

Age cannot chill our valour: no,
The helmet sits on locks of snow;
And still we love to store our prey,
And eat the fruits our arms purvey.
You flaunt your robes in all men's eyes,
Your saffron and your purple dyes,
Recline on downy couch, or weave
The dreamy dance from morn to eve:
Sleeved tunics guard your tender skins,
And ribboned mitres prop your chins.
Phrygians!—nay rather Phrygian fair!
Hence, to your Dindymus repair!
Go where the flute's congenial throat
Shrieks through two doors its slender note,
Where pipe and cymbal call the crew;
These are the instruments for you:
Leave men, like us, in arms to deal,
Nor bruise your lily hands with steel."

Iulus, after brief prayer to Jupiter, sends an arrow through the boaster's temples. But Apollo, taking the shape of the boy's guardian, Butes, warns him to be content with this first triumph: such weapons, says he of the silver bow, with that jealousy of mortals common to all pagan divinities, are not for boys.

Attack and defence are maintained vigorously on either side. Turnus is everywhere, dealing death where he comes. Mezentius, the infidel, tries to fire the palisade: Messapus, "the horse-tamer," calls for ladders to scale it. A detachment of Volscians form a "tortoise," by linking their shields like a pent-house over their heads, and under this cover try to plant their ladders; but the Trojans hoist a huge rock aloft, and dash it down with murderous effect upon

the roof of shields, crushing the bearers underneath. A tall wooden flanking-tower is set on fire by Turnus, and falls over, with its defenders, among the enemy. Two only survive the fall, one of whom—a slave-born warrior, who bears a blank shield—flings himself into the Rutulian ranks, and dies there fighting against overwhelming numbers. The other, Lycus, a swift and active runner, reaches the rampart of the intrenchment, and nearly succeeds in climbing over amongst his friends, when Turnus grasps him and bears him off, in spite of the missiles showered down by his sympathising comrades.

Pandarus and Bitias, two brothers of gigantic stature, have charge of one of the gateways of the intrenched camp. They throw the double gates wide open, and take their stand, one on either side, within. Fast as the more venturous spirits among the enemy rush through, they are either felled by the giant warders, or, if they escape these first, are slain inside by the other Trojans, who even carry the battle outside the gates. Word comes to Turnus of the increasing boldness of the enemy. He rushes to the rescue, slays right and left, and brings Bitias to the ground by hurling at him a huge *falarica*—a spear used in the great catapults which formed the artillery of those days. His brother Pandarus by main strength closes the great gates, shutting out some of his unfortunate friends as well as his enemies, and shutting in, to the dismay of the Trojans, their terrible enemy. When he sees Turnus, however, he rushes upon him to avenge his brother's death; but the Rutulian cleaves him with his keen

falchion down to the chin. Then he turns on the dismayed defenders, and smites them right and left. Had he but bethought himself then to open the gates once more, and let his comrades in, so cowed were the Trojans at the moment that their defeat was certain. But all his heart is set on slaughter, and the Trojans, rallied by Mnestheus (the hero of the galley-race), soon find out that he is alone. Nevertheless he fights his way gallantly towards the river.

“The Trojans follow, shouting loud,
And closer still and closer crowd.
So when the gathering swains assail
A lion with their brazen hail,
He, glaring rage, begins to quail,
And sullenly departs :
For shame his back he will not turn,
Yet dares not, howsoe’er he yearn,
To charge their serried darts
So Turnus lingeringly retires,
And glows with ineffectual fires.
Twice on the foe e’en then he falls,
Twice routs and drives them round the walls :
But from the camp in swarms they pour,
Nor Juno dares to help him more.

At length, accoutred as he stood,
Headlong he plunged into the flood.
The yellow flood the charge received,
With buoyant tide his weight upheaved,
And cleansing off the encrusted gore,
Returned him to his friends once more.”

CHAPTER XL

THE DEATH OF PALLAS.

THE scene changes to Olympus, where Jupiter holds a council of the gods. He is as much troubled as in the Iliad with the dissensions in his own court, and holds the balance with difficulty between his queen and his daughter, each unscrupulous in their partisanship. Venus complains to him bitterly of the peril in which her son Æneas stands, by reason of Juno's machinations. That goddess replies, with considerable show of reason, that Æneas has brought his troubles upon himself; that Latinus and Turnus and Lavinia were all going on peacefully before he came; and that—if the whole history of the Trojans must needs be discussed again—Venus herself, by her instrument Helen, was the mother of all the mischief. The king of the gods somewhat loses patience, and swears by the great river of Styx, with the awful nod which shakes Olympus, that Trojan and Rutulian shall even fight it out, and the Fates shall decide the question. So he dissolves the Olympian convocation.

The fight at the Trojan encampment is renewed in

the morning as fiercely as ever. But succours are on their way. The ships of the Etruscan leader Tarchon—the name which future kings of Rome were to bear with little alteration—have been sailing all night down the Tyrrhenian Sea, under their new-found chief Æneas. His galley leads the van; and with him in the stern—for he takes the helm himself—sits young Pallas, hearing him tell of the great deeds of old. The poet gives us something like a muster-roll of the Etruscan chiefs and their followings; more interesting perhaps to the ear of a Roman, who would catch up here and there some historical allusion to a place or family with which he claimed some connection, than to the modern reader, who can have no such sympathies. He gives us, too, the figure-heads from which the ships of the most noted captains took their names: the Tiger—a favourite, it would seem, to our English nautical taste even down to the present day—the Centaur, the Apollo, the Triton, the Mincius—the last-named from the river that flowed by Virgil's own town of Mantua,—

“Fair town! her sons of high degree,
Though not unmixed their blood;
Three races swell the mingled stream:
Four states from each derive their birth:
Herself among them sits supreme,
Her Tuscan blood her chiefest worth.”

Æneas has a strange rencontre in his night-voyage. Suddenly there rises round his galley a circle of water-nymphs—they are his own vessels, thus transformed, and their errand is to warn him of the danger in which

Iulus and his people lie. The sight which meets his eyes as he enters the Tiber at daybreak confirms their tidings: he sees the camp surrounded by enemies. Standing high upon his deck, he raises aloft the wondrous shield. The Trojans recognise in the signal the arrival of the help they so sorely need, and welcome it with prolonged shouts. Then their enemies note it also,—and the fight grows fiercer still. Tarchon—who seems to act as captain of the fleet under Æneas as admiral—looks out a good place to beach the galleys, bids the men give way with a will, and runs them well up, the forepart high and dry—all, except the gallant captain himself, whose vessel breaks her back and goes to pieces.

Turnus has left the command of the storming-party to his lieutenants, and gone down himself with a picked force to oppose Æneas's landing. The Arcadian contingent, unused to fighting on foot and half in the water, get into confusion, and turn. Young Pallas gallantly rallies them, for the honour of his countrymen. He himself wins his spurs, in this his first field, by deeds which would become Æneas himself. One brief episode in his exploits is pathetic enough. There are fighting on the Rutulian side the twin-brothers Thymer and Larides:—

“So like, the sweet confusion e'en
Their parents' eyes betrayed;
But Pallas twin and twin between
Has cruel difference made;
For Thymer's head the steel has shorn;
Larides' severed hand forlorn
Feels blindly for its lord;

The quivering fingers, half alive,
Twitch with convulsive gripe, and strive
To close upon the sword."

Young Lausus, the son of the tyrant Mezentius, is leading his men against Pallas, when a greater soldier interposes between the two young heroes. Turnus comes, and Pallas meets him eagerly—yet not without full consciousness of the inequality of the combat. He hurls his spear, so strongly and truly that it penetrates through Turnus's shield, and slightly grazes his body. Then Turnus launches his weapon in return, and it goes right through the metal plates and tough ox-hide of the shield, and through the corselet of Pallas, deep into his breast, and the young prince falls to the ground writhing in his dying agony. Turnus stands astride of the corpse, and shouts triumphantly to the discomfited Arcadians. Yet there is something generous, according to the fierce code of the times, in his treatment of his dead enemy; he neither strips the armour, nor makes any attempt to prevent the Arcadians from carrying off the body. He bids them bear it home to King Evander for burial; only with a warning as to what fate awaits the allies of the foreigner:—

"Who to Æneas plays the host,
Must square the glory with the cost."

One trophy he takes from the person of the dead prince—a belt richly embroidered in gold with the tale of the daughters of Danaus. He girds it on over his armour, unconscious of the influence it will have upon his own fate.

Æneas, in a different quarter of the field, hears of the death of his young esquire, and furiously hews his way towards Turnus. All who cross his path, veteran chiefs and young aspirants to glory, alike go down before him, and no appeal for mercy checks his hand. Eight prisoners he takes alive; but only with the intent to slay them as victims at the funeral pile of Pallas. But the rival champions do not meet as yet. Juno, fearing the issue of an encounter with Æneas in his present mood, cheats the eyes of Turnus with a phantom in his enemy's shape. When Turnus meets it in the fight, the shape turns and flies towards the ships, pursued by him with bitter taunts on Trojan cowardice. One galley has her gangway down, and the false Æneas takes refuge on board. Turnus follows; when the moorings are loosed by an invisible hand, the galley floats down stream, and the Rutulian, raving and half determined to end his disgrace by suicide when he finds out how he has been cheated, is swept along the coast to his own town of Ardea.

Mezentius takes his place, and seconded by his son Lausus, spreads slaughter amongst the Trojan ranks. But a spear cast by the strong hand of Æneas lodges in the groin of the father, and the son gallantly rushes forward to cover his retreat. Æneas warns the youth to stand back—some thought, it may be, of Pallas makes him unwilling to take the younger life; but Lausus dares his fate, and the Trojan falchion, driven home through his light shield and broidered vest—

“The vest his mother wove with gold”—

reaches the young chief's heart. Æneas can be generous too. He will not strip the body ; nay, he chides the cowardice of Lausus's comrades, who hesitate to lift the dying youth, and himself raises him carefully from the ground, and gives him what comfort may be gathered from the fact that he has met his death "at Æneas's hand."

Mezentius hears of the death of his son as he lies by the river-bank bathing his wound. With a cry of agony the father bewails his own crimes, which had thus brought death upon his innocent son. Crippled as he is, he calls for his good horse Rhæbus, who has ever hitherto borne him home victor from the battle. To-day they two will carry home the head of Æneas, or fall together. He charges desperately upon the Trojan, who is right glad to meet him. Thrice he wheels his horse round his wary enemy, hurling javelin after javelin, which the Vulcanian shield receives on its broad circumference, and retains until it looks, in the poet's language, like a grove of steel. At last Æneas launches a spear which strikes Mezentius's horse full in the forehead, and poor Rhæbus rears, and rolling over in his dying agonies, pins his master to the ground. Æneas rushes in upon the fallen champion, who, disdaining to ask quarter, bares his throat to the sword, and dies as fearlessly as he has lived.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DEATH OF CAMILLA.

ÆNEAS's first care, after raising a trophy crowned with the arms of the slain Mezentius, is to send home to Evander the body of his son. A picked detachment escort it to Laurentum with all honour, wrapped in robes of gold ---embroidered robes, wrought by the hands of the unfortunate Dido. The youth's charger, Æthon, is led behind the bier, and his lance and helm are also borne in the procession; a custom which we have borrowed from the Romans, and retain to this day in our military funerals. Æthon weeps copious tears for his dead master; an incident not so entirely due to a poet's imagination as it may seem, since the historian Suetonius tells us that some favourite horses of Julius Cæsar showed the same tokens of grief, and refused their food, just before his death. Another feature in the obsequies of Pallas is happily obsolete; the prisoners whom Æneas had taken alive with this express object follow behind the corpse, to be sacrificed at the funeral pile. There was nothing horrible to the polished courtiers of Augustus in such a thought. Even

in that age of refinement and civilisation, the emperor himself, after the defeat of Antony's party at Perusia, was said to have slaughtered three hundred prisoners in honour of the great Julius, to whom altars were raised as a demi-god. True, the story was probably an invention of political opponents; but the mere fact that such a story could be invented and believed, marks strongly the cruel temper of the age. The old king receives back, in bitter grief, all that remains to him of the gallant son whom he had so lately sent forth to his first fatal field: and he charges Æneas, by the mouth of the envoys, to avenge him on his son's murderer—for this he only waits to close his own eyes.

A truce of twelve days is agreed upon between the armies for the burial of their dead. The Latins have meanwhile sent an embassy to ask aid from Diomed, the hero of the Trojan war, who has come home and settled in Italy. He is paying the penalty of having wounded Venus in the battle before Troy, and is not allowed to reach his native Argolis. He warns the ambassadors that it is not good to war against the race from which Æneas comes—he, for his part, will have no more of it. At this crisis the Latins hold a council of war. Their king advises a compromise with the enemy—a grant of land on which to settle, or a new equipped fleet to carry the fortunes of Troy yet further on. Then there rises in the council one Drances, a better orator than warrior, who boldly proposes to give the princess Lavinia to the bridegroom whom the gods have sent. Or, let Turnus meet Æneas in single

combat—why are the rest to suffer for his pride? Is all Latium to be steeped in blood that Turnus may have a princess to wife? Turnus is not slow to reply. He will go forth to meet the Trojan willingly—will Drances follow him?

Even while they thus debate, Æneas has left his intrenchments by the Tiber, and is marching on the city. The queen with her daughter and the terrified women betake themselves to the temples, while Turnus sets himself to marshal his allies for the defence. While some are left to guard the walls, the whole force of cavalry ride out to meet the enemy. His best lieutenant for this service is the huntress Camilla. She leads her light Volscian horse, supported by Messapus with his heavier Latins, to meet the cavalry of Æneas, while Turnus with his squadron lays an ambuscade for him in a wooded valley. Camilla, with her fair staff of followers, Tulla and Tarpeia—names of ominous sound to Roman ears—deals slaughter in the enemy's ranks in no feminine fashion.

“A Phrygian mother mourned her son
For every dart that flew.”

But, fierce Amazon as she is, she is tempted by a woman's love of ornament. There is a Trojan, one Chlorus, priest as well as man-at-arms, conspicuous for the brilliant accoutrements of his charger and himself. His horse is covered with chain-armour clasped with gold; and purple and saffron, and gold embroidery—the full splendours of Asiatic costume which he affects—mark him out as a tempting prey. It might have

been, the poet suggests, a desire to deck some of her national temples with such distinguished spoils,—or it might have been, he admits, only a woman's fancy to wear them herself,—but she singles him out and chases him over the field, regardless of her own safety. Arruns the Tuscan has long sought his opportunity, and his spear reaches Camilla as she gallops in headlong pursuit of her gay enemy.

“In vain she strives with dying hands
To wrench away the blade :
Fixed in her ribs the weapon stands,
Closed by the wound it made.
Bloodless and faint, she gasps for breath ;
Her heavy eyes sink down in death ;
Her cheek's bright colours fade.”

So dies Camilla ; and the Volscian horse are so disheartened by her loss that they turn and fly to the city, so closely pursued by the Trojans that the gates have to be hastily closed, shutting out in many cases friends as well as foes. Turnus leaves the cover of the wood to attack Æneas, but night falls on the plain before their forces meet.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST COMBAT.

THE spirit of the Latins is wellnigh broken—they feel that their cause is a failing one. And Turnus sees angry eyes bent upon him, as the cause of this ill-fated war. He will take all hazards, then, upon himself: there shall be no more blood shed of Latin or Rutulian—unless it be his own. He declares his intention to Latinus—he will meet Æneas in single combat. The old king is reluctant to allow it: Queen Amata, with tears and prayers, begs him to forego his resolution. Lavinia herself—such is the entire reticence of the maiden nature in epic story—speaks no word throughout the whole. But, as modern critics have long discovered, there is no question but that she has a sentiment for Turnus. She hardly could have a thought of Æneas, whom she had never seen. When she hears her mother's appeal to the Rutulian prince, she does almost more than speak—she blushes, through her tears.

“Deep crimson glows the sudden flame,
And dyes her tingling cheek with shame.

So blushes ivory's Indian grain,
 When sullied with vermilion stain :
 So lilies set in roseate bed
 Enkindle with contagious red."

These last four lines, in Mr Conington's version, read like a bit of Waller or Lovelace—and yet they are a fairly close translation of the original.

The challenge is sent to Æneas, and by him joyfully accepted. There shall be solemn truce between Trojan and Rutulian, while the rival champions do battle for the princess and the kingdom. Turnus, too, has one weapon of Vulcan's forging—his father's sword. But now, in his haste for the combat, he snatches up and girds on a blade of less divine temper. The lists are set between the two lines, and the oaths duly sworn. Æneas calls the gods to witness, that if the victory falls to Turnus, the Trojans on their part shall retire at once to Evander's colony, and make war no more on Latium. Or even if he himself be the conqueror, he will not treat the Latins as a conquered race :—

"I will not force Italia's land
 To Teucrian rule to bow ;
 I seek no sceptre for my hand,
 No diadem for my brow :
 { Let race and race, unquelled and free, }
 { Join hands in deathless amity." }

But at once, before the rivals meet, by the instigation of Juno the truce is broken on the part of the Rutulians. They have a strong fear that their own champion, young and gallant as he is, is no equal

match in arms for the great Æneas : he is but moving to his death. So speaks the seer Tolumnius, and points to an omen on the river-bank : an eagle swooping down upon a flock of swans, and bearing one off in his talons, but put to flight when they turn in a body and pursue him. Æneas is the bird of prey—they are the unwarlike swans ; let them but turn on him, and he too will fly. The seer is not content with the mere exposition of auguries ; at once he hurls his own javelin into the Trojan ranks, and brings down his man. The fight speedily becomes general. Æneas, unarmed and bareheaded, rushes between the ranks, and is wounded by an arrow while he calls loudly on his own men to keep the truce. None knew, or cared to know, from whose hand the arrow came : for no man, says the poet, was ever heard to boast of such a coward's shot.

Then, while Æneas is led to the camp, faint and bleeding, by his son Iulus and his faithful Achates,—while the aged leech, Iapis, vainly tries all his skill upon the wound—for the barb will not quit the flesh,—Turnus spreads slaughter among the Trojan ranks. But only for a while. Venus drops a healing balsam into the water with which her son's wound is being bathed ; at once the arrow-head drops out, and the hero stands up sound and whole. Again he dons the Vulcanian armour, and re-enters the battle. The Rutulians give way before him, but he scorns to smite the fugitives, and seeks out only Turnus. And Turnus, pale and unnerved—for the presage of his fate lies heavy upon his soul—has no longer any mind to

meet him. It is very strange, to our modern notions of heroism, to see this infirmity of resolution in a tried soldier and captain like Turnus. But the heroes of these elder days lose heart at once when they feel their star is no longer in the ascendant. Turnus, like Hector in the *Iliad*, shrinks from the fate which he foresees.

Turnus has a sister, Juturna, a river-nymph and demi-goddess, a favourite of Juno, who has warned her if possible to save her brother. She now takes the place of his charioteer, and, while she drives rapidly over the field, takes care to keep him far from Æneas, who is calling loudly on him to halt and keep his compact of personal duel. At last the Trojan leader, baffled in this object, throws all his forces suddenly on the town, which lies almost at his mercy, stripped of its defenders, and bids his captains bring torches and scaling-ladders. A horseman, sorely wounded in the face, brings word of this new danger to Turnus as he is wheeling madly over the battle-field, and implores him to come to the rescue. He looks round towards the walls, and sees the flames already mounting. Then he rallies once more the old courage which had so strangely failed him. He sees his fate as clearly as before, but he will meet it. He knows his sister now, too late, in his charioteer; but he will fly no longer—"Is death such great wretchedness, after all?" He leaps from his chariot, as he knows, to meet it, lifts his hand, and shouts to his Rutulians to stay their hands, and the ranks of both armies divide before him as he makes towards

the part of the wall where Æneas is leading the attack.

“But great Æneas, when he hears
The challenge of his foe,
The leaguer of the town forbears,
Lest town and rampart go,
Steps high with exultation proud,
And thunders on his arms aloud ;
Vast as majestic Athos, vast
As Eryx the divine,
Or he that roaring with the blast
Heaves his huge bulk in snow-drifts massed,
The father Apennine.”

Trojans, Latins, and Rutulians look on in awe and admiration as the two chiefs advance to try this last ordeal of battle. Each hurl their spears—without effect ; then Turnus draws his sword, and they fight on hand to hand—

“Giving and taking wounds alike,
With furious impact home they strike ;
Shoulder and neck are bathed in gore :
The forest depths return the roar.
So, shield on shield, together dash
Æneas and his Daunian foe ;
The echo of that deafening crash
Mounts heavenward from below.”

But the faithless sword which Turnus had so carelessly girded on instead of his father's good weapon, though it has done him fair service on the crowd of meaner enemies, breaks in his grasp when he essays it on the

armour of Æneas, and thus helpless, he takes to flight, Æneas hotly pursuing.

“ Five times they circle round the place,
Five times the winding course retrace ;
No trivial game is here : the strife
Is waged for Turnus’ own dear life.”

A dark-plumaged bird is seen to hover round the devoted head of the Rutulian chief, half blinding him with its flapping wings. It is a Fury whom the king of the gods has sent in that shape to harass him. At length, in his flight, he finds a huge stone, which not twelve men of “to-day’s degenerate sons” could lift.

“ He caught it up, and at his foe
Discharged it, rising to the throw,
And straining as he runs.
But ’wilderer fears his mind unman ;
Running, he knew not that he ran,
Nor throwing that he threw ;
Heavily move his sinking knees ;
The streams of life wax dull and freeze :
The stone, as through the void it past,
Failed of the measure of its cast,
Nor held its purpose true.
E’en as in dreams, when on the eyes
The drowsy weight of slumber lies,
In vain to ply our limbs we think,
And in the helpless effort sink ;
Tongue, sinews, all, their powers bely,
And voice and speech our call defy :
So, labour Turnus as he will,
The Fury mocks the endeavour still.

Dim shapes before his senses reel :
 On host and town he turns his sight :
 He quails, he trembles at the steel,
 Nor knows to fly, nor knows to fight :
 Nor to his pleading eyes appear
 The car, the sister charioteer.

‘The deadly dart Æneas shakes :
 His aim with stern precision takes,
 Then hurls with all his frame ;
 Less loud from battering-engine cast
 Roars the fierce stone, less loud the blast
 Follows the lightning’s flame.
 On rushes as with whirlwind wings
 The spear that dire destruction brings,
 Makes passage through the corselet’s marge,
 And enters the seven-plated targe
 Where the last ring runs round.
 The keen point pierces through the thigh,
 Down on his bent knee heavily
 Comes Turnus to the ground.”

The Ætulan prince confesses his defeat, and asks his life in no craven spirit, for the sake of his aged father—bidding Æneas think of old Anchises. The conqueror half relents, when his eyes fall upon something which makes that appeal worse than useless.

“Rolling his eyes, Æneas stood,
 And checked his sword, athirst for blood.
 Now faltering more and more he felt
 The human heart within him melt,
 When round the shoulder wreathed in pride
 The belt of Pallas he espied,
 And sudden flashed upon his view
 Those golden studs so well he knew,

Which Turnus in his hour of joy
Stripped from the newly-slaughtered boy,
And on his bosom bore, to show
The triumph of a satiate foe.
Soon as his eyes at one fell draught
Remembrance and revenge had quaffed,
Live fury kindling every vein,
He cries with terrible disdain :
‘ What ! in my friend’s dear spoils arrayed
To me for mercy sue ?
’Tis Pallas, Pallas guides the blade ;
From your cursed blood his injured shade
Thus takes the atonement due.’
Thus as he spoke, his sword he drave
With fierce and fiery blow
Through the broad breast before him spread ;
The stalwart limbs grow cold and dead ;
One groan the indignant spirit gave,
Then sought the shades below.”

So closes the Æneid. Does any reader complain that the poet has not carried the story further ? With the death of Turnus the catastrophe is complete. The princess of Latium is the prize of the victor ; and the loves of Æneas and Lavinia are certainly not of that romantic character that we need care to follow them. The Trojans are settled in Italy—two races under one name. For so has Jupiter promised, as some indulgence to the feelings of his queen, that the old Latin name shall at least not be merged in the detested name of Trojan, and on such terms has the goddess reluctantly acquiesced in the settlement of the wanderers on Italian ground. Latins, not Trojans, are to rule

the world. Thus has the poet combined the indigenous glories of his country with the grand descent of its rulers from the old mythical heroes of Troy.

Yet there is a singular vein of melancholy to be traced in the words of Æneas, when he parts with his son before he goes to his last victory. They are perhaps the noblest words which the poet has put into his mouth, and they have something of the sadness which more or less affects all true nobility:—

“In his mailed arms his child he pressed,
Kissed through his helm, and thus addressed :
‘Learn of your father to be great,
Of others to be fortunate.’”

The old tradition—well known, no doubt, to Virgil’s audience and first readers—was that the son, not the father, lived to enjoy the sovereignty of Latium. The hero of many vicissitudes was not held to have settled down into the peaceful rest which he looks forward to, throughout the poet’s story, as the end of all his campaigns and wanderings. The Rutulians, so said the legends, would not yet bow to the foreign usurper ; and Æneas fought his last battle with them on the banks of the river Numicius, and then, like so many of the favourite heroes of a people—disappeared ; either carried, living or dead, by some divine agency, to heaven, or caught away in the arms of the river-god.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THE *Æneid* has two drawbacks to its popularity as an epic poem amongst modern readers. One defect is common to all classical fiction—that there is no love-romance, properly so called, on the part either of the hero or of any other male character in the poem. Love, as now understood, has no place either in Virgil or Homer. We find in their verse none of those finer shades of feeling, that loyal personal allegiance, that high unselfish devotion, the mysterious sympathy, as untranslatable by anything but itself as the most perfect wording of the poet, which, nursed, it has been said, in the lap of Northern chivalry, but surely of much older birth, has given now for centuries to poet and to novelist their highest charm and inspiration. Poets had to sing as they could without it in Virgil's days. Augustus and Octavia, as they listened to the courtly *raconteur*, would have opened their eyes wide with astonishment if he had sung to them of the devotion of Lancelot, as surely as they would have laughed at the purity of Galahad. They understood what love was, in their fashion; many ladies of the

court sympathised with Dido, no doubt. They understood well enough "the fury of a woman scorned." They had seen a whole love-poem in real life, with the appropriate tragical *dénouement*, in Antony and Cleopatra. That was their notion of the grand passion. Probably the more shrewd among them looked upon Antony as a fool to prefer "love" to empire, and applauded Æneas's "piety" in obeying the oracles of the gods, when they pointed to a new wife whose dowry was a kingdom. There was quite love enough in the action of the poem to suit their tastes, and at anything better or purer they would have only shrugged their fair patrician shoulders.

But there is a more serious defect in the interest of the Æneid, when presented to English readers. It is, that Æneas is no hero. All the defences and apologies which have been made for him are perfectly just, and perfectly unnecessary. He was a hero quite good enough for the court of Augustus, and so far quite suitable for Virgil's purpose. Le Bossu was perfectly right when he contended that a hero, to be an object of legitimate interest, need not be a pattern of moral virtues. He might have gone further, and said that such paragons, who are plainly superior to the ordinary weaknesses of human nature, generally make very dull heroes indeed. Undoubtedly Æneas is a dutiful son, a respectable father, and, it may even be admitted, in spite of the unfortunate way in which he lost his wife, an exemplary husband. He spread his palms out to heaven in the most orthodox fashion on all occasions, and listened obediently to the message which the gods

were always sending him, to set up his home in Latium at all costs. All these estimable qualities are enough to furnish forth a dozen heroes. He is also ready to fight on all proper occasions; and as to the charge that he is equally ready to weep upon all occasions, which has been brought against him by one set of critics, and excused by others, both might have spared their pens; for it is a weakness which may be charged with equal truth upon most of the heroes, not only of classical fiction, but of classical history. It is not only that the chiefs of the *Iliad* weep without fearing any imputation against their manliness, but if we are to trust the unsensational chronicles of Cæsar, the whole rank and file of his army, even the veterans of the tenth legion—the “fighting division”—when first they heard that they were to be led against the tall and truculent-looking Germans, “could not restrain their tears,” and set to work to make their wills forthwith. The thing is unaccountable, except from some strange difference of temperament; for who can imagine a company of our veriest raw ploughboy recruits so behaving themselves? They might shake in their very shoes; they might even very probably run away: but crying and howling is not our way of expressing emotion, after childhood is past. But we are accustomed to read of such exhibitions of feeling in the natives of warmer climates, as, for instance, in the characters of Scripture; and an occasional burst of tears on Æneas’s part would not have unheroed him in our estimation one whit. It is his desertion of Dido which makes an irredeemable poltroon of him in

all honest English eyes. A woman and a queen receives the shipwrecked wanderer with a more than Oriental hospitality; loves him, “not wisely but too well”—and he deserts her. And then Mercury is made to remark, as a reason for Æneas getting away as quickly as possible, that “*varium et mutabile semper fœmina!*”—that the poor *lady’s* mood was changeable, forsooth! The desertion is in obedience to the will of the gods, no doubt. That explanation satisfied the critics of Augustus’s day, and he was to them, as Virgil calls him, the “pious” Æneas. To the modern reader, such an authorisation only makes the treachery more disgusting. The morality of English romance, ancient or modern, is by no means immaculate. Tristram and Iseult, still more Lancelot and Guinevere, are of very frail clay. The Sir Galahads ride alone; then, now, and always, in fiction as in fact. But a hero who could be false to a woman, and who was to find in that falsehood the turning-point to fame and success,—he might befit the loose tale with which the *rybauder* raised a laugh round the camp-fire, but he was the subject of no lay to which noble knight or dame would listen. The passion might be only *pars amours*, but it must be loyal. To keep such faith, once pledged, the hero might break all other laws, divine or human; but keep it he must. “*Loyaulté passe tout, et faulseté honnet tout.*” The principle is by no means the highest, but it is incomparably higher than Virgil’s. And this makes Lancelot, in spite of his great crime, a hero in one sense, even to the purest mind, while the calculating piety of Æneas is revolting.

The apologetic criticisms of some translators, who have felt themselves bound not only to give a faithful version of their author, but to defend his conception of a hero, are highly entertaining. Dryden, who was said by one of his malicious critics to have written "for the court ladies," admits candidly that he knows they "will make a numerous party against him," and that he "cannot much blame them, for, to say the truth, it is an ill precedent for their gallants to follow;" winding up with a satirical suggestion that they would do well at least "to learn experience at her cost." But in spite of this special pleading, even Dryden cannot conceal from himself that his hero makes but a very poor figure in this part of the story; nor can he resist the humorous remark that he was more afraid of Dido, after all, than of Jupiter. "For you may observe," says he, "that as much intent as he was upon his voyage, yet he still delayed it until the messenger was obliged to tell him plainly, that if he weighed not anchor in the night, the queen would be with him in the morning." Delille says that Æneas "triumphed over his passions in order to obey the will of heaven;" and forgets to add, that the triumph would have been more complete and more creditable if it had been achieved somewhat earlier in the story. He notices the unfortunate fate of poor Creusa,—left to follow as she might, and never missed till the more fortunate survivors met at the rendezvous,—only to say how necessary it was for the purposes of the story to dispose of her somehow, if there was a new wife awaiting Æneas in Italy; and how the account (his own ac-

count) of his affectionate search for her (with the usual tears) must have recommended him to Dido, and excused that poor lady for falling in love with him instantly! Rousseau has more truth in his epigram, —what could Dido expect better from a man who left his lawful wife to be burnt in Troy, and vowed he never missed her? Segrais, very like a Frenchman of the days of Louis XIV., thinks all would have been right if Æneas had but thrown a little more sentiment into the parting, and had bestowed upon Dido a few of those tears which were so ready upon less pathetic occasions.* As to the scene in the Shades, where the

* Dido has always been a favourite heroine with Frenchmen, and has been worked up into three or four tragedies. One writer, partly adopting M. Segrais's notion of how things ought to have been—that is to say, how a Frenchman would have behaved himself when such a parting was inevitable—has made Æneas take at least a civil farewell of the injured queen:—

“ Helas ! si de mon sort j'avais ici mon choix,
Bornant à vous aimer le bonheur de ma vie,
Je tiendrais de vos mains un sceptre, une patrie :
Les dieux m'ont envie le seul de leurs bienfaits,
Qui pourrait réparer tous les maux qu'ils m'ont faits.”

And Dido, mollified by this declaration, far from cursing the fugitive lover in her last moments, assures him of her unchangeable affection, rather apologising for having so inconveniently fallen in his way, and delayed him so improperly from Lavinia and his kingdom:—

“ Et toi, d'ont j'ai troublée la haute destinée,
Toi, qui ne m'entends plus—adieux, mon cher *Ænéas* !
Ne crains point ma colere—elle expire avec moi,
Et mes derniers soupirs sont encore pour toi ! ” †

† Le Franc de Pompignan, “ *Didon*.”

false lover begins at last to make his tardy excuses and apologies, the French critic fairly throws up his brief for the defence, and contents himself with the suggestion that this was one of those passages in the poem with which Virgil himself was dissatisfied, and which he must certainly have intended to correct. But Æneas has, in fact, little personal character of any kind. He is only what Keble calls him, "a shadow with a mighty name;" and that writer even goes so far as to suggest, that in the curse imprecated upon him by Dido, and her treatment of him in the Shades, we may see an intimation that the poet intended the abasement of his hero.*

Turnus will always find more favour in the eyes of modern readers than his rival. Our English sympathies do not run at all with the foreign adventurer who comes between him and his promised bride, and who claims both the lady and the kingdom by virtue of a convenient oracle. Mr Gladstone's may perhaps be only an ingenious fancy, that Turnus was really the favourite with the poet himself; that although he made Æneas victorious, as was required, in order to carry out the complimentary reference of the Roman origin to Troy, still the young chief of native Italian blood, maintaining a gallant struggle for his rights against gods and men, and only conquered at the last by supernatural force and fraud, was purposely held out to popular admiration. But we must, at least, feel sympathy with him as utterly over-weighted in the final struggle by the superior strength and immortal

* Prælect., ii. 724.

arms of his adversary, and the flapping of the Fury's awful wings

To trace the influence of the *Æneid* upon modern poetry would require a separate treatise. Spenser is full of Virgil. Tasso's great poem is in many passages the *Æneid* made Christian, with its heroes transplanted from the days of Troy to those of the Crusades. Dante borrows less from him, though with an intenser reverence he takes him for his "master" and his guide. In his mind, indeed, Virgil seems to have held a place midway, as it were, between the Pagan and the Christian life. If Beatrice represents, as has been said, the heavenly "Wisdom," Virgil is, in his allegory, the human intellect at its best and purest, which comes as near heaven as unassisted humanity may; for he is the guide who only quits the Christian poet when he is close to the gates of Paradise.

The "*Sortes Virgilianæ*" were long in use, often as a fashionable pastime, sometimes in graver earnest: the inquirer opened the volume at random, and took for the answer of fate the first few lines which caught his eye. In the times of the later Roman emperors, they ranked among the most popular, and perhaps the least objectionable, of the many superstitious practices which were then so prevalent. The Emperor Severus was said to have been encouraged in his boyhood by the very words which had such an effect on Octavia—"Thou shalt be our Marcellus!" And when subsequently he showed a taste rather for elegant accomplishments than for military renown, again the "*Sortes*," consulted for him by his

father, gave the well-known lines already quoted,* in which the glory of the Roman is pronounced to be that of the conqueror, not of the student or the artist. The superstition held its ground, through the middle ages, down to times very near our own. The story rests upon no mean authority, that Charles I. once tried the oracle with a startling result. He was in the Bodleian Library while the Court lay in Oxford, and was there shown a splendid edition of Virgil. Lord Falkland suggested to him sportively that he should try the "Sortes." The lines upon which the king opened are said to have been these, as they stand in Mr Conington's version :—

“Scourged by a savage enemy,
An exile from his son's embrace,
So let him sue for aid, and see
His people slain before his face :
Or when to humbling peace at length
He stoops, be his or life or land,
But let him fall in manhood's strength,
And welter tombless on the sand.”

It was a gloomy oracle ; and Falkland, anxious to remove the impression, tried his own fortune. He lighted on Evander's lament over his son Pallas :—

“I knew the young blood's maddening play,
The charm of battle's first essay ;
O valour blighted in the flower !
O first mad drops of war's full shower !”

A few months afterwards Falkland fell at the battle of Newbury, barely thirty-four years old.

There has always been a mystical school of classical interpretation, who see in the *Æneid*, as in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, a tissue of allegory from first to last. Not content with identifying the Trojan chief with Augustus, they found a double meaning in every character and every legend in the poem. Bishop Warburton, in his well-known ‘*Divine Legation*,’ expended a great amount of learning and research to prove that in the Descent to the Shades in the sixth book we have a sketch, scarcely veiled, of the great Eleusinian mysteries. Others saw in Dido the love-passion and the fate of Cleopatra, Antony in Turnus, the flight of Marius to the marshes in the person of Sinon, the miserable end of Pompey in Priam—

“The head shorn off, the trunk without a name.”

It is impossible to enjoy either Homer or Virgil, if their text is to be “improved” at every step after this sort. Augustus and Octavia looked to the poet for a tale of the olden time, and he told it well. No doubt he threw in graceful compliments to Rome and its ruler; but to have to guess at some hidden meaning all along would have been far too severe a tax on the imperial audience, and would certainly not heighten the enjoyment of modern readers.

One would be glad to know what was the view that was really taken by that profligate court on the one hand, and by the poet himself on the other, of the theological machinery of the poem; those powerful and passionate Genii who pull the wires of the human puppets to gratify their own preferences and hatreds,

and are themselves the slaves of an awful Fate which overrides them all. Wherever Justice had fled from the earth, as the legend ran, in those pagan days, she had not found refuge in heaven. The human virtues which Virgil gives his heroes were no copies of anything celestial. Such lessons as the "gods" taught were chiefly perfidy and revenge. For men of intellect and of a pure life—and such is credibly said to have been Virgil's—the only salvation lay in utter unbelief of such a creed; or, at most, a stoical submission to that Unknown Fate which ruled all things human and divine. But even when the forms and creeds of religion had become a mockery, the rule of right, however warped, was recognised—in fiction, if not in fact: and Virgil, though for some reason he declined to paint the true hero at full length, has enabled us to pick out his component parts from his sketches of a dozen characters.

END OF VIRGIL.

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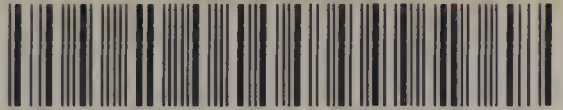
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